METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR MANAGING CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SURVEY RESPONSES

FIELD OF INVENTION

The present invention generally relates to a method and a system for managing customer feedback survey responses. For example, the feedback survey may be initiated with a customer for a service provided by a service provider.

BACKGROUND

Conventionally, ratings (or feedback) for a service provider may be found in various mediums such as on the internet or in printed publications. Such ratings are supplied by previous customers based on their experience with, and their perception of, the service provider. For example, on the internet, ratings may typically be freely posted by anyone and on a voluntarily basis. As a potential customer searches for a suitable service provider, the potential customer would typically search the internet in an attempt to locate various service providers and any feedback/ratings provided by previous customers in order to obtain an indication of the quality of the service providers. The potential customer may then decide on which service provider to engage based on such feedback/ratings.

While the above conventional systems and methods of collecting feedback/ratings may provide some information to potential customers on past experiences with the service provider, the information provided may not fairly or accurately represent the quality of the service provider as a whole. For example, while there is typically no incentive to post a positive review of a service provider, people tend to be more motivated to post negative reviews of a service provider to vent their dissatisfaction and in some cases, with an intent to hurt the service provider's business as a way of retribution. Therefore, the feedback/ratings received for a service provider may be heavily biased/skewed towards a small group of people who were dissatisfied (whether reasonable or not) and do not fairly represent/indicate the quality of the service provider as a whole. In addition, since

the feedback/ratings may be freely posted by anyone anonymously, there is no mechanism to verify that each feedback/rating is posted by actual previous customers of the service provider. For example, negative ratings could be fraudulently posted by competitors who wish to damage the service provider's reputation. Accordingly, the above conventional systems and methods do not provide a fair and reliable representation of the overall quality of the service provider.

On the other hand, service providers may have ratings or testimonials provided on their website from previous customers. However, such ratings/testimonials are usually selectively posted on the website to portray a good image with the purpose of attracting new customers. For example, it is common that all ratings/testimonials provided on the website for a service provider are positive. In certain cases, the ratings/testimonials may even be fabricated by the service provider since there is no mechanism to verify their authenticity. Therefore, the ratings provided on the service provider's website are generally not reliable and do not fairly indicate/represent the quality of the service provider as a whole.

A need therefore exists to provide a method and system for managing customer feedback survey responses that seek to address one or more of the above-mentioned problems.

SUMMARY

According a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for managing customer feedback survey responses, the method comprising:

receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service; and

receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals,

wherein the method is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

Preferably, the method further comprises:

prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service; and

accepting the response received for the predetermined survey interval in a database or initiating an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider,

wherein the method is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

Preferably, the method is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

Preferably, the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the feedback received is stored in the database when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

Preferably, the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

The plurality of stages of the service may comprise an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

The initial stage of the service may relate to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services to the customer, the implementation stage may relate to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage may relate to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

Preferably, the method comprises categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

Preferably, the status may comprise one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

Preferably, the method further comprises generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of the feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

Preferably, the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received at the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

Preferably, the method further comprises generating, upon request, a second type of feedback report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

Preferably, the method further comprises linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

According a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a system for managing customer feedback survey responses, the system comprising:

a feedback survey initialization module for receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service;

a feedback receiving module for receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals; and

a database module for storing the feedback received from the customer,

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

Preferably, the system further comprises:

an action module for prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service,

wherein the action module is operable to accept the response received for the predetermined survey interval in the database module or initiate an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider, and

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

Preferably, the feedback survey initialization module is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

Preferably, the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action

for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the feedback received is stored in the database module when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

Preferably, the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

The plurality of stages of the service may comprise an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

The initial stage of the service may relate to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services to the customer, the implementation stage may relate to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage may relate to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

Preferably, the system further comprises a categorising module for categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

Preferably, the status comprises one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

Preferably, the system further comprises a first feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

Preferably, the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received for the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

Preferably, the system further comprises a second feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a second type of feedback report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

Preferably, the system further comprises a linking module for linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

According a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided a computer program product, embodied in a non-transitory computer-readable storage medium, comprising instructions executable by a computing processor to perform the method according to the above first aspect of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Embodiments of the present disclosure will be better understood and readily apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art from the following written description, by way of example only, and in conjunction with the drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 depicts an exemplary system for managing customer feedback survey responses according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 depicts a flow diagram generally illustrating an exemplary method for managing customer feedback survey responses according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the main or broad functionality modules of the system according to an example of the present invention;

Fig. 4 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the login module according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 5 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the sign up process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 6 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the company account creation/registration process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 7 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the service provider (e.g., professional) account creation process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 8 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the customer/client account creation/registration process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 9A illustrates an exemplary invitation email according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 9B depicts an exemplary login web page generated by the system according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 10 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram in relation to the handling of the feedback surveys and the responses in the system according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 11A depicts an exemplary simple report according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 11B depicts an example detailed report according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 12 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the feedback survey creation process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 13A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the first survey interval according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 13B depicts an exemplary rating request sent to the customer for the first survey interval via mobile text messaging according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 14A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the second survey interval according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 14B depicts an exemplary rating request sent to the customer for the second survey interval via mobile text messaging according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 15A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the third survey interval according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 15B depicts an example rating request sent to the customer for the third survey interval via mobile text messaging according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Figs. 16A and 16B illustrate an example presentation of the details of the feedback survey for various stages;

Fig. 17 depicts an example email which may be sent to the customer at the completion of the first survey interval;

Fig. 18 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the first report type (e.g., simple report) generation process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 19 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram of the second report type (e.g., detailed report) generation process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 20 depicts the feedback history/records for a service provider, along with their status, in an example of the present invention;

Fig. 21 depicts an exemplary scenario for illustrating the locking mechanism according to an example of the present invention;

Fig. 22 depicts a conventional computer system.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Example embodiments of the present invention seek to provide a method and a system for managing customer feedback survey responses in a manner that provides/enhances, for example, fairness and reliability. Details of the method and system according to exemplary embodiments of the present invention will be described below.

Some portions of the description, which follows, are explicitly or implicitly presented in terms of algorithms and functional or symbolic representations of operations on data within a computer memory. These algorithmic descriptions and functional or symbolic representations are the means used by those skilled in the data processing arts to convey most effectively the substance of their work to others skilled in the art. An algorithm is here, and generally, conceived to be a self-consistent sequence of steps leading to a desired result. The steps are those requiring physical manipulations of physical quantities, such as electrical, magnetic or optical signals capable of being stored, transferred, combined, compared, and otherwise manipulated.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, and as apparent from the following, it will be appreciated that throughout the present specification, discussions utilizing terms such as "scanning", "calculating", "determining", "replacing", "generating", "initializing", "outputting", or the like, refer to the action and processes of a computer system (or similar electronic device) that manipulates and transforms data represented as physical quantities within the computer system into other data similarly represented as physical quantities within the computer system or other information storage, transmission or display devices.

The present specification also discloses an apparatus (or a system) or a device for performing the operations of the methods. Such apparatus or device may be specially constructed for the required purposes, or may comprise other device selectively activated or reconfigured by a computer program stored in the computer. The algorithms and displays presented herein are not inherently related to any particular computer or other apparatus. Various machines may be used with programs in accordance with the teachings herein. Alternatively, the construction of more specialized apparatus or device to perform the required method steps may be appropriate. As an example, the structure of a conventional general purpose computer will appear from the description below.

In addition, the present specification also implicitly discloses a computer program (including a mobile application for a mobile device), in that it would be apparent to the person skilled in the art that the individual steps of the method described herein may be put into effect by computer code. The computer program is not intended to be limited to any particular programming language and implementation thereof. It will be appreciated that a variety of programming languages and coding thereof may be used to implement the teachings of the disclosure contained herein. Moreover, the computer program is not intended to be limited to any particular control flow. There are many other variants of the computer program that can use different control flows without departing from the spirit or scope of the disclosure.

Furthermore, one or more of the steps of the computer program may be performed in parallel rather than sequentially. Such a computer program may be stored on any computer readable storage medium. The computer readable storage medium may include storage devices such as magnetic or optical disks, memory chips, or other

storage devices suitable for interfacing with a computer or a mobile device. The computer program when loaded and executed on such a computer or mobile device effectively results in an apparatus or a device that implements the steps of the preferred method described herein.

The present disclosure may also be implemented as hardware modules. More particular, in the hardware sense, a module is a functional hardware unit designed for use with other components or modules. For example, a module may be implemented using discrete electronic components, or it can form a portion of an entire electronic circuit such as an Application Specific Integrated Circuit (ASIC). Numerous other possibilities exist. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the system can also be implemented as a combination of hardware and software modules.

Fig. 1 depicts an exemplary system 100 for managing customer feedback survey responses according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The system 100 comprises a feedback survey initialization module 104, a feedback receiving module 108, and a database module 112. The feedback survey initialization module 104 is configured for receiving, from a service provider 116, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer 120 in relation to a service provided by the service provider 116. The service provider 116 may be any person providing a service in relation an item of goods and/or services, such as a professional, a salesperson or a worker. For example and without limitation, the service provider may be a car salesperson, an insurance agent or a real estate agent, and the customer 120 may thus correspondingly be a person seeking to purchase a car, an insurance policy or a property.

The feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service. For example, the service may comprise three stages such as an initial stage of the service (e.g., initial impressions of the service provider 116 before sales), an implementation stage of the service (e.g., comfort level with the service provider 116 during sales/delivery), and a final stage of the service (e.g., overall experience with the service provider after sales/delivery). For example, the initial stage of the service may relate to a pre-sales period 1608 for securing a sale of the item of goods and/or

services to the customer 120, the implementation stage may relate to an execution period 1604 for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage may relate to a completion period 1605 after the sale has been fulfilled (e.g., see Figs. 16A and 16B).

The feedback receiving module 108 is configured for receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer 120. The feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals. For example, each response may include ratings and/or remarks for the corresponding stage of the feedback survey. The database module 112 is configured for storing/maintaining the feedback received from the customers 120. In particular, the database module 112 has stored therein an accessible/organised collection of the feedback received from the customers 120 and predetermined associated information such as details of the service, the survey, service provider 116 and the company or association 124 linked/tagged to the service provider 116.

In the example embodiment, the feedback survey initialization module 104 is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider 116 from being initiated in the system 100 based on a state of the feedback survey. In this regard, in a preferred embodiment, the system 100 further comprises an action module 128 for prompting an action input from the service provider 116 in reply to the response made by the customer 120 for a predetermined survey interval for the service. The predetermined survey interval is a selected/chosen survey interval (preferably a final survey interval) which the system 100 is configured to prompt for an action input from the service provider 116 in reply to the response made by the customer 120 for that selected/chosen survey interval. The action module 128 is operable to accept the response received for the predetermined survey interval in the database module 112 or initiate an investigation process (or find-out process) to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider 116. Due to the presence of the action module 128, the feedback survey initialization module 104 may be configured to be in the lock state when the action input for the service provider 116 is outstanding (i.e., the state of the feedback survey).

In an example embodiment, the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer 120 for the predetermined survey interval in the database module 112 or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer 120 for the predetermined survey interval. The response received is stored in the database module 112 when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action. The response received will also be stored in the database module 112 when the action input received is the investigate action.

For example, if the service provider 116 is satisfied/agreeable to the response received for the predetermined survey interval, the service provider 116 may choose the accept action and the response received, along with the other response(s) received for the other survey interval(s) of the feedback survey, will be stored in the database module 112. As will be described in further detail later, feedback surveys completed with the accept action will be classified/categorised in the database module 112 as such and a first type of feedback report (e.g., a simple report for providing a snapshot or quick overview of recent experiences with the service provider 116) is configured to be generated based on such completed feedback surveys. In practice, at least in the first instance, customers 120 typically prefer a simple report for providing a quick snapshot or concise information on the service provider 116, instead of having to review detailed information (e.g., full feedback history) of the service provider 116. This minimises the time required to review the information and enable a quick decision on whether to engage (or continue to engage) the service provider 116. Accordingly, it may be prudent for the service provider 116 to maintain a good simple report (i.e., by choosing the accept action appropriately).

On the other hand, if the service provider 116 is dissatisfied/non-agreeable to the response received for the predetermined survey interval, the service provider 116 may choose the investigate action to find out the reason for the response received. As also will be described in further detail later, the feedback (i.e., all responses received for the feedback survey) will be stored in the database module 112 and feedback surveys completed with the investigate action will be classified/categorised

as such. Such completed feedback surveys will not be included in the simple report but will be present in a second type of feedback report which includes all feedback surveys for the service provider 116 (e.g., a detailed report containing full history of the feedback surveys for the service provider 116).

Accordingly, while selecting the investigate action may prevent the feedback from being present in the simple report (thus maintaining a good simple report without or with minimal unfavourable/non-agreeable feedback), the feedback will still be recorded in the database module 112 and will appear in the detailed report when generated upon request (thus providing a fair system in that unfavourable feedback will be recorded and not dismissed entirely). In particular, the simple report and the detailed report are publicly accessible. Therefore, this provides the service provider 116 with the flexibility to set an individually definable threshold on the feedback/ratings level he/she wishes to maintain in the simple report based on his/her circumstances/objectives. In an embodiment, selecting the investigate action will result in the system 100 alerting the relevant parties, such as a supervisor of the service provider 116. Therefore, appropriate actions may be taken by the supervisor such as listening to the reason provided by the customer 120 and teaching/mentoring the service provider 116 to avoid the same problems/issues. In another embodiment, the company 124 or the industry governing institution may set a minimum customer satisfaction standard (i.e., a definable threshold such as 3 or 4 out of 5 stars ratings) for the service provider 116 to achieve in relation to the simple report. Not achieving such a minimum customer satisfaction standard on a number of occasions may cause the company 124 to take disciplinary actions or the industry governing institution to disallow the renewal of the service provider's practicing licence. Accordingly, the system 100 advantageously encourages accountability and promotes good service quality by the service provider 116.

The above-described locking feature/mechanism advantageously assists in providing a fair and reliable way of managing customer feedback survey responses. For example, with the locking mechanism, the service provider 116 is required or is forced to make an action input in reply to a response made by the customer 120 for the predetermined survey interval, such as either accepting the response as it is (e.g., a positive or agreeable response) and the response will be stored in the

database module 112 or investigating the response (e.g., a negative or non-agreeable response) through the above-described investigation process. Otherwise, the system 100 (in particular, the feedback survey initialization module 104) is configured to be in the lock state which prevents any new feedback survey for another service provided by the particular service provider 116 from being initiated in the system 100. In this regard, not being able to register new feedback surveys would be undesirable for the service provider 116 for a number of reasons. For example, the supervisor or manager of the service provider 116 (or any party interested in the feedback of the service provider such as an industry governing institution) would be aware of this status and would likely approach or question the service provider 116 if the service provider 116 does not make the action input to resolve this. The longer the period of time that this status is maintained, the greater the likelihood that the supervisor or manager will approach or question the service provider 116. Furthermore, the performance of the service provider 116 may be viewed more poorly in the case where the quantity and rating of the feedback surveys received are a measure of the performance of the service provider 116.

The above exemplary factors would therefore pressure or encourage the service provider 116 to make an action input in order for the system 100 (in particular, the feedback survey initialization module 104) to return to an open state from the lock state where the system 100 will be capable of accepting new feedback survey(s) for other service(s) provided by the service provider 116. Once the action input is made, the feedback received (regardless of positive or negative) for that service provided by the service provider 116 will be recorded in the database module 112 and thus available to be published in a feedback report on the service provider 112. This therefore provides fairness and reliability since feedback received will be recorded in the database module 112 regardless of being positive or negative and the feedback are more current/up-to-date (since the service provider 112 is discouraged from holding back or delaying the release of any feedback).

In an embodiment, in addition to not being able to initiate any new feedback survey when the service provider 116 has outstanding action input(s), the system 100 is also not able to generate any feedback report on the service provider when requested. This serves to further pressure the service provider 116 to make the

above-mentioned action input in order for the system 100 to revert back to the open state since potential new customers may refrain from engaging the service provider 116 due to the unavailability of the service provider's feedback report.

It will be appreciated to a person skilled in the art that the system 100 described herein may be specially constructed for the required purposes, or may be implemented in a general purpose computer or other devices. For example, each of the above-described modules may be software modules realised by a computer program or a set of instructions executable by a computer processor 132 to perform the required functions, or may be hardware modules being a functional hardware unit designed to perform the required functions. It will also be appreciated that a combination of hardware and software modules may be implemented in the system 100. Furthermore, it will be appreciated that the above-described modules, when implemented as software modules, may be stored in any computer readable storage medium or device 136, such as but not limited to, magnetic or optical disks, memory chips, or other storage devices. The software modules may be stored in one or more of the storage mediums 136, as a whole or in parts, and the storage medium(s) 136 containing the software modules 136 may be positioned locally with the system 100 or may be located at remotely such as at a remote server (not shown) accessible by the system 100 via the internet. For simplicity, the interconnections of the storage medium 136 and the processor 132 within the system 100 are not shown as they are well known in the art.

Fig. 2 depicts a flow diagram generally illustrating an exemplary method 200 for managing customer feedback survey responses according to an example embodiment of the present invention. The method 200 corresponds to the system 100 as described above and thus details already described above may not be repeated for conciseness. The method 200 comprises a step 204 of receiving, from a service provider 116, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer 120 in relation to a service provided by the service provider 116 (the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service), and a step 208 of receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer 120 (the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals). In particular, at step 220, the

method is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider 116 from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey. In a preferred embodiment, the method further comprises a step 212 of prompting an action input from the service provider 116 in reply to the response made by the customer 120 for a predetermined survey interval for the service, and a step 216 of accepting the response received for the predetermined survey interval in a database or initiating an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider 116. In this case, in step 220, the method is configured to be in the lock state when the action input for the service provider is outstanding. It will be appreciated to a person skilled in the art that the above-described steps may be performed in another order as appropriate and are not limited to the order presented. Furthermore, the above steps are not intended to be construed to necessitate individual/separate steps and may be combined as or performed in one step where appropriate without deviating from the scope of the present invention.

For clarity and illustration purposes, the above exemplary embodiments will now be described in further detail with respect to specific examples according to embodiments of the present invention. However, it will be appreciated to a person skilled in the art that the present invention is not limited to the specific examples, and certain aspects of the specific examples may be modified or varied as desired or appropriate while still falling within the scope of the exemplary embodiments as described in Figs. 1 and 2.

Fig. 3 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 300 of the main or broad functionality modules of the system 100 in an example according to an embodiment of the present invention. The system 100 in the example of Fig. 3 includes a login module 304 for a user such as a service provider 116 or a customer 120 to login to the system 100, a survey creation module 308 for creating a new feedback survey for a customer 120 in relation to a service provided by a service provider 116, and a feedback report generation module 312 for generating a feedback report on the service provider 116 based on feedback provided by previous customers 120 for the service provider 116 recorded in the system 100.

By way of example, Fig. 4 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 400 of the login module 304 in the case where the user is a service provider 116. In a first step 404, the login module 304 is operable to provide options for the service provider 116 to either login to an existing account in step 406 or to sign up for a new account in step 408. In step 406, the service provider 116 may login by entering the necessary security/login information (e.g., user ID and password) or to sign up for a new account in step 408. The sign up process 408 will be described in further details later with reference to Fig. 5. After the security information is entered by the service provider 116 to login, the security data associated with the service provider 116 stored in a database module 112 will be retrieved in step 410 and compared in step 412 with the security information entered. For example, the password entered is compared with the password stored in the database module 112 for the service provider 116. If there is a mismatch in step 412, the login module 304 is operable to deny access to the system 100 in step 414 and may proceed to assist the service provider 116 to recover his/her password in steps 416 to 420 in a manner known in the art and will not be described further herein. If there is a match in step 412, the login module 304 may proceed to check whether the account is suspended in step 424 and whether the subscription to use the system 100 is valid in step 428. In this regard, the system 100 may be administered by a third party and subscription and other usage fees may be collected by the third party. If the account is suspended, the login module 304 is configured to deny access to the system 100 in step 425. If the subscription is determined to be valid in step 428, the login module 304 may further check whether the service provider 116 is linked/tagged to a company or an association 124 in step 430. If the service provider 116 is tagged, the survey creation module 308 is enabled in step 432 for allowing new feedback survey(s) to be created by the service provider 116 for a customer 120. On the other hand, if either the subscription is determined to be invalid in step 428 or the service provider 116 is determined to be untagged/unlinked in step 430, the service provider 116 may still access the system 100 but the survey creation module 308 will be disabled in step 434. For example, the feedback survey initialization module 104 shown in Fig. 1 is operable to disable the survey creation module 308 in step 434 or enable the survey creation module 308 in step 432.

Fig. 5 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 500 of the sign up process stated in step 408 of Fig. 4 for creating/registering a new account in the system 100. In the example, a company account, a service provider (e.g., a professional) account or a customer/client account may be created. As shown in Fig. 5, the process may prompt the user whether he/she wishes to register a company, register as a professional, or register as a client in steps 504, 508, and 512, respectively. According to the input provided by the user, the process will proceed to the company account creation process 506, the professional account creation process 510, or the client account creation process 516. In the case of client registration, the process is configured to determine whether there are any active/pending survey(s) for the client in step 514. If there are active/pending survey(s), the client account creation process 516 will be allowed, otherwise, the client registration will be rejected in step 515.

Fig. 6 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 600 of the company account creation/registration process in step 506 mentioned in Fig. 5. As a first step 604, the process may prompt the user to enter the details of the company 124 he/she wishes to register with the system 100, such as the company name, the company address, and the industry in which the company 124 belongs to. In step 608, the process may determine whether the industry in which the company 124 belongs to exists in the system 100. If the industry does not exist in the system 100, the process proceeds to notify the system administrator in step 612 and ends the company account creation process since the industry is not covered. If the industry exists, the process prompts the user to supply details of an authorised person of the company (e.g., a director) in step 610, such as the authorised person's name, designation and contact details (e.g., email address and contact number). With the contact details of the authorised person, the system administrator may contact the authorised person primarily for verification purposes in step 616. Based on whether the verification is successful, the system administrator may then approve or deny the company account creation/registration in step 620. If approved, the process may send an email to the user confirming that the company account has been registered/created in the system 100 in step 624 and then activate the company account in step 628. If denied, the process may send an email to the user in step 632 informing him/her that the company account registration/creation has been rejected.

Fig. 7 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 700 of the service provider (e.g., professional) account creation process mentioned in step 510 of Fig. 5. As a first step 702, the process may prompt the professional to enter his/her details, such as his/her name, identification number, and address. The process may also request the professional 116 to enter the name of the industry in which he/she belongs to in step 704 and the name of company 124 to which he/she is working at in step 706. In step 708, the process is operable to determine whether the company 124 exists in the system 100. If the company 124 does not exist in the system 100, the process prompts the professional 116 whether he/she wishes to register the company 124 in the system 100. If yes, the company account creation/registration process 600 as described with reference to Fig. 6 will be initiated in step 712. Otherwise, the professional 116 may join as an associate of a group administered by the system administrator in step 714. In the step 718, the process may prompt the professional 116 to supply the details of his/her supervisor in the company 124, including name and contact details such as email address and telephone number. In step 720, the process may then prompt the professional 116 to enter the desired login details such as a user id and a password, and to accept the terms and conditions governing the use of the system 100. Thereafter, the process may verify the contact details provided by the professional 116 as shown in steps 724, 726, 728 and 730 in a manner known in the art and will not be described further herein. Upon successful verification, the process may then collect a subscription fee from the professional 116 in steps 732 and 734, and an invoice may then be generated and forwarded to the professional 116 in step 736 such as via post or email. Subsequently, the process may seek approval from the company 124 (i.e., the above-mentioned authorised person of the company 124) for the professional 116 to be linked/tagged to the company 124 in step 740. Upon approval by the company 124, the process may inform the professional 116 such as via post or email in step 744 and the professional 116 will be linked/tagged to the company 124 in the database module 112 in step 746. If disapproved by the company 124, the process may inform the professional 116 in step 748 and the professional 116 may select another company in step 750 to be linked/tagged with.

Fig. 8 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 800 of the customer/client account creation/registration process 516 mentioned in Fig. 5. As a first step 804, the process is configured to send an invitation email to the customer 120 inviting him/her to participate in the feedback survey and providing any desired information/explanation regarding the feedback survey. In a preferred embodiment, the invitation email is initiated by the service provider 116 and sent to his/her customer 120. The invitation email may also contain a link configured for directing the customer 120 to a login web page where the customer 120 may create a new customer account or login to an existing account. By creating/registering an account in the system 100, the customer 120 will be a registered customer and be able to view/retrieve the customer's current and previous transactions with various service providers 116 and participate in a public sharing facility (e.g., in a social media/sharing media such as FACEBOOK, TWITTER, and LINKEDIN). Preferably, when creating a customer account, the email address (i.e., user ID) of the customer 120 will be prefilled in the login web page and cannot be modified for security purposes. For example, this ensures that the only customer 120 which the service provider 116 sends the email to is able to create a customer account in the system 100. This also verifies that the customer 120 is the actual customer of the service provider 116 since the email address cannot be modified. Accordingly, to create a customer account, the customer 120 may be directed to a login web page by clicking a link contained in the email in step 806. The login web page comprises a field for the customer 120 to enter their desired account/login password and a field for the customer 120 to accept the terms and conditions governing the use of the system 100 in step 808.

Subsequently, the process may prompt the customer 120 whether he/she wishes the account to be linked to his/her social/sharing media account in step 812 such as FACEBOOK. By linking the account to a social media account of the customer 120, the above-mentioned public sharing facility is enabled which allows the survey feedback provided by the customer 120 to be automatically posted in the social media account. To link the account to a social media account, the process may prompt the customer 120 to enter their social media login information in step 814. Subsequently, the customer account will be activated in step 816 and ready for use by the customer 120.

In the example, if the customer 120 does not register for an account in the system 100 (i.e., an unregistered customer), the customer 120 may still participate in the feedback survey but would not be able to view/retrieve the customer's previous transactions with various service providers 116 and would not be able to participate in the public sharing facility.

By way of example only and without limitation, Fig. 9A illustrates an exemplary invitation email 900 which may be sent to the customer 120 as described above. As shown, the email 900 may include an introductory welcome message and information on the manner in which the feedback survey will be conducted. The email 900 may also include one or more links providing options for the customer 120 to login or to create a new customer account. For example, a first link 904 may be provided for the customer 120 to participate in the public sharing facility/mode (i.e., step 814 of Fig. 8), and a second link 908 may be provided for the customer 120 to participate in the private sharing facility/mode (i.e., step 808 of Fig. 8 without subsequently linking to a social media account). For illustration purposes only, Fig. 9B shows a login web page 950 generated by the system 100 for the customer 120 to login or create a new customer account. For example, an existing customer 120 may login by entering the registered email address and password in the email address field 952 and password field 954, respectively. Alternatively, the existing customer 120 may login using their social media login information such as their FACEBOOK login 958. For a new customer 120, he/she may create a new customer account by entering their desired login password in the password fields 960 or using their existing social media login 964 and agreeing to the terms and conditions to sign up. As can be seen from Fig. 9B, in the case of client registration, the email address field 962 is prefilled (with the email address provided by the service provider 116) and locked (i.e., cannot be modified).

In the above-described company account creation/registration process, service provider account creation/registration process, customer/client account creation/registration process, each party (i.e., the customer 120, the service provider 116 and the company 124) participating in the system 100 is verified in order to ensure reliability and accuracy. In particular, the company 124 is verified by a third

party system administrator, the service provider 116 is verified by the company 124, and the customer 120 is verified by the service provider 116. Therefore, the identity of the customers 120, the service providers 116 and the companies 124 participating in the system 100 can be trusted.

As shown in Fig. 8, the system 100 in the example provides the flexibility for the customer 120 to choose between a private sharing facility/mode 802 and a public sharing facility/mode 810. If the customer 120 participates in the private sharing mode 802, the customer 120 would be non-identifiable in any feedback report generated on a service provider whom the customer 120 has provided a feedback. For example, only reduced details of the customer 120 would appear in the feedback report such that the customer 120 cannot be identified. For example, only the initials of the customer's 120 name and the street and/or names where the customer 120 resides would appear in the feedback report (e.g., see Figs. 11A and 11B). The private sharing mode 802 provides customer protection/confidentiality and is suitable for customers 120 who wish to provide feedback but do not wish their identity to appear in the feedback report for various reasons. For example, the customer 120 may not wish to make public that he/she has made the transaction (e.g., buying an investment property) or may simply wish to remain anonymous. In this regard, although the customer 120 may not be identifiable in the feedback report, the feedback is reliable (i.e., from an actual customer of the service provider 116) since the customer 120 has been verified by the service provider 116 as described above. Therefore, the system 100 advantageously enables customer confidentiality, yet feedback reliability.

If the customer 120 participates in the public sharing mode 810, the customer's 120 feedback (if accepted by the service provider as described herein) would be automatically posted in the social media account of the customer 120 and the social media account of the service provider 116 (if available) for sharing with other connected members. As an illustrative example, a customer 120 may have purchased a car and a feedback (along with brief transaction details such as the car model, the service provider's name and the location of the company 124) is posted on the customer's 120 social media account which could be view by his/her connected friends. As a result, a friend of the customer 120 who may already have

an interest in purchasing a car (without the customer's knowledge) may rely on the customer's 120 feedback as a trusted source (since they are friends) in deciding whether to engage the same service provider 116.

Fig. 10 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1000 in relation to the handling of the feedback surveys and the responses in the system 100 in the example. As a first step 1002, a request is made from a service provider 116 to initiate a new feedback survey with a customer 120 in relation to a service provided by the service provider to the customer 120. The feedback survey creation process will be described in detail later with reference to Fig. 12. Assuming that the prescribed conditions are met (e.g., valid account (step 424), valid subscription (step 428), and tagged to a company/association 124 (step 430)), an invitation email 900 will be sent to the customer 120 to invite the customer 120 to participate as described above with reference to Figs. 8 and 9. In step 1006, a first survey of a plurality of surveys 1004 will be sent to the customer 120, e.g., via a mobile text message or an email. As mentioned earlier, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals (e.g., first, second, and third survey intervals 1006, 1008, 1016 shown in Fig. 10), each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service. In the example, the plurality of stages of the service comprises an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service. In particular, the initial stage of the service may relate to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of the item of goods and/or services to the customer 120, the implementation stage may relate to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage may relate to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled. The first, second and third survey intervals 1006, 1008, 1016 will be described in detail later with reference to Figs. 13, 14 and 15, respectively.

In the example, the predetermined survey interval is the third survey interval 1016 (i.e., the final survey interval of the feedback survey). At step 1020, the action module 128 of the system 100 is operable to prompt an action input from the service provider 116 in reply to the response made by the customer 120 at the third survey interval 1016. Preferably, the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer 120 at the third survey interval 1016 or an

investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer at the third survey interval 1016. For example, the service provider 116 may select the investigate action to find out the reason for a negative response received and/or to avoid the feedback from being published in the first report type (e.g., the simple report) as described hereinbefore. When the action input received is the accept action, the feedback received is stored in the database module 112 in step 1022. Once stored in the database module 112, the feedback is made available for feedback report generating purposes and thus may be published upon request. On the other hand, when the action input received is the investigate action, the investigation process as described hereinbefore is initiated at step 1024.

In an embodiment, when the investigate action is selected, the system 100 is operable to request a prescribed fee from the service provider 116 in steps 1026, 1028 and 1030, in order to invoke the investigation process. Upon payment, the system 100 is operable to inform the system administrator of the service provider's 116 desire to participate in the investigation process. The system administrator may then take the appropriate actions to investigate or find out the reason for the response made by the customer 120 in step 1034 such as by contacting the customer 120. The result/outcome (e.g., the reason(s)) of the investigation process obtained in step 1036 may then be forwarded to the service provider 116 such as via email, facsimile or post. The result will also be stored in the database module 112 so that it can be retrieve and review by the supervisor and system administrator if desired.

In the example, two types of feedback reports for the service provider 116 are generated by the system 100, in particular, a first type (or a simple report) and a second type (or a detailed report). The simple report is configured to provide a quick snapshot and concise overview of the feedback received for the service provider 116 and an example of a simple report is shown in Fig. 11A. Preferably, the simple report shows only the response 1104 received for the predetermined survey interval (e.g., the third or final survey interval 1016) amongst the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals 1106, 1008, 1016. That is, the simple report only shows the response 1104 received for the third survey interval 1016 instead of all the responses received for all the survey intervals 1006, 1008, 1016. In addition, the

simple report is limited to a predetermined number of most recently completed feedback received (which has been completed with the accept action) for the service provider 116. In particular, feedback completed with the address action is not included in the simple report. For example, the predetermined number may be from 5 to 20 most recently completed feedbacks, and more preferably 10.

As described before, when the action input received is the accept action (i.e., the service provider 116 accepts the response made by the customer 120), a post may be generated based on the response received from the customer 120 and posted on a social media account (e.g., FACEBOOK) associated with the service provider 116 as shown in steps 1044 and 1046. In addition, a post may also be generated and posted on a social media account associated with the customer 120 as shown in steps 1048 and 1050. Accordingly, feedback posts may automatically appear in the social media account(s) of the customer 120 and/or the service provider 116. This is made possible by the locking mechanism described herein (which is initiated while awaiting for the service provider's 116 input at step 1020) since an accept action by the service provider 116 at step 1020 will also automatically trigger a post in the social media account(s).

On the other hand, a detailed report is configured to provide the full history of feedback surveys for the service provider 120, including pending survey(s), terminated survey(s), completed survey(s) with the accept action or completed survey(s) with the investigate action. For illustration purposes only, an example detailed report is shown in Fig. 11B. As shown, the detailed report presents all of the responses 1104, 1108, 1112 received for all the survey intervals of each completed feedback survey. The detailed report may be desired by a customer 120 who wishes to review further feedback received for the service provider 116 and in greater detail than those provided in the simple report. In an embodiment, the detailed report may require a payment from either the customer 120 or the service provider 116 while the simple report may be provided for free. The process for generating the simple and detailed reports will be described later with reference to Figs. 18 and 19.

Accordingly, the detailed report enables the customer 120 to review the full history of feedback surveys for the service provider 120, that is, past feedback received for

the service provider 116. In an embodiment, the detailed report may also include current feedback and/or future/subsequent feedback. For example, subsequent feedback surveys may be initiated with subsequent customers after the feedback survey for the current customer has been initiated or completed. Accordingly, since all feedback surveys are stored in the database module 112, the detailed report may be generated at a point in the future for a previous customer 120 to include subsequent feedback for the service provider 116 (i.e., feedback received for the service provider 116 since they had their previous transaction) to enable the previous customer 120 to look forward and review feedback received for the service provider 116 since they had their previous transaction. For example, this advantageously allows the customer 120 to determine whether the quality of the service provider 116 has been maintained, has improved or has deteriorated since their previous transaction.

In an embodiment, the past feedback relates to the feedback received before a predetermined number of most recently received feedback at a certain point in time, the current feedback relates to the predetermined number (or predetermined time period) of most recently received feedback at the certain point in time, and subsequent feedback relates to the feedback received after the certain point in time. For example, the certain point in time may be with respect to the time when the feedback survey for a particular customer 120 has been initiated or completed. As an illustrative example, a customer 120 may request a detailed report of the service provider 116 at the certain point in time. At this stage, only the past and current feedback are available. The customer 120 may request an update of the detailed report at some point in the future and subsequent feedback which have since been made by subsequent customers 120 will be made available in the detailed report thus enabling the customer 120 to look forward. In the same manner, the simple report may also include subsequent feedback for enabling the customer 120 to look forward.

The feedback survey creation process will now be described with reference to Fig. 12. Firstly, survey information and customer information are obtained in steps 1202 and 1204. Prior to initiating/creating the feedback survey for the service provided by the service provider 116, the system 100 is operable to determine whether there is

any action input outstanding (i.e., the action input described in step 1020 of Fig. 10) for the service provider 116 in step 1206. If there is any outstanding action input(s), the system 100 (in particular, the feedback survey initialization module 108 as described hereinbefore) is configured to in a lock state for preventing any new feedback survey(s) for any service(s) provided by the particular service provider 116 to be initiated until all outstanding action input(s) at step 1020 shown in Fig. 10 are completed by the particular service provider 116 (step 1208).

As mentioned previously, the locking mechanism 1210 advantageously assists in enabling a fair and reliable way of managing customer feedback survey responses. For example, with this locking mechanism 1210, the service provider 116 is required or is pressured/forced to make an action input in reply to a response made by the customer 120, such as either accepting the response (e.g., an agreeable response) and the feedback will be stored in the database module 112, or investigating the response (e.g., an unfavourable or a negative response) through the above-described investigation process. If any action input is outstanding, the system 100 (in particular, the feedback survey initialization module 104) is configured to be in the lock state which prevents any new feedback survey for another service provided by the particular service provider 116 from being initiated. For example, the supervisor or manager of the service provider 116 would be aware of the outstanding action input(s) and would likely approach or question the service provider 116 if the service provider 116 does not make the required action input(s) to resolve this. The longer the period of time that this status is maintained, the greater the likelihood that the supervisor or manager will approach or question the service provider 116. Furthermore, the performance of the service provider 116 may be viewed more poorly in the case where the quantity and rating of the feedback surveys received are a measure of the performance of the service provider 116.

When it is determined that there is no outstanding action input at step 1206, the new feedback survey request from the service provider 116 will be accepted. In step 1212, the process may also prompt the service provider 116 to select which type of feedback report (e.g., the above-mentioned first type (e.g., simple report) or second type (e.g., detailed report) of feedback report) to send to the customer 120. If a simple report is selected, a simple report of the service provider 116 will be

generated in steps 1214 and 1216. On the other hand, if a detailed report is selected, a detailed report of the service provider 116 will be generated as shown in steps 1218 and 1220. The first/simple and second/detailed types of report generation processes will be described in further detail later with reference to Figs. 18 and 19, respectively. A prescribed fee may be charged (either to the service provider 116 or the customer 120) by the system administrator for generating the first and/or second types of feedback report on the service provider 116 as shown in steps 1222, 1224, 1226 and 1228. The billing process is well known in the art and thus will not be described in detail herein. In step 1230, the feedback survey is activated which results in an invitation email 900 (e.g., see Fig. 9) being sent to the customer 120 at step 1232 and the commencement of the first survey interval 1006 (i.e., the first feedback/rating request is sent to the customer 120 via mobile text messaging or email) in step 1234. In step 1236, a reference/report id may also be assigned to the feedback survey for referencing purposes.

Fig. 13A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1300 of the first survey interval 1006. As a first step 1302, a first feedback/rating request (S1) is sent to the customer 120. For illustration purposes only, Fig. 13B shows an example rating request sent to the customer 120 via mobile text messaging. For example only, the rating may range from “0” to “5”, with “1” meaning poor, “5” meaning excellent, and “0” meaning to exit the feedback survey. In steps 1304 and 1306, either the service provider 116 or the system administrator may terminate the feedback survey for various valid reasons such as customer 120 inadvertently provided a wrong feedback, bank loan disapproved, and so on. Upon termination, the feedback survey will end and be recorded/categorised in the database module 112 as terminated. Upon receiving the rating (R1) from the customer 120 in step 1312, the rating received is analysed in step 1314 and an error message is sent to the customer 120 should the rating be outside the allowable range (e.g., outside “0” to “5”). After the rating is determined to be within the allowable range, the rating received is further analysed to determine whether it is “0” in step 1316. If so, the feedback survey will be terminated. Otherwise, the rating is deemed to be of an acceptable value and is stored in the database module 112. In an embodiment, the rating received may be sent back to the customer 120 in step 1318 as a security measure to provide confirmation of the rating received by the system 100. In step 1320, various details

of the feedback survey are updated, such as the survey status, the rating received, and the timestamp indicating when the rating was received. This will be described further below and illustrated in Figs. 16A. The first survey interval 1006 is thus completed and the second survey interval 1008 may commence at step 1320.

Fig. 14A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1400 of the second survey interval 1006. As a first step 1402, a second feedback/rating request (S2) is sent to the customer 120. For illustration purposes only, Fig. 14B shows an example rating request sent to the customer 120 via mobile text messaging. Similarly, the rating may range from "0" to "5", with "1" meaning poor, "5" meaning excellent, and "0" meaning to exit the survey. In steps 1404 and 1406, either the service provider 116 or the system administrator may terminate the feedback survey for various valid reasons as mentioned above. Upon termination, the feedback survey will end and be recorded/categorised in the database module 112 as terminated. Upon receiving the rating (R2) from the customer 120 in step 1412, the rating received is analysed in step 1414 and an error message is sent to the customer 120 should the rating be outside the allowable range. After the rating is determined to be within the allowable range, the rating received is further analysed to determine whether it is "0" in step 1416. If so, the feedback survey will be terminated. Otherwise, the rating is deemed to be of an acceptance value and is stored is stored in the database module 112. As a security measure, the rating received may be sent back to the customer 120 in step 1418 to provide confirmation of the rating received by the system 100. In step 1420, the survey details are updated by the system 100. In step 1422, the system 100 is configured to provide an option for the service provider 116 to close the second survey interval 1006 to complete the second survey interval 1006. This may include the service provider 116 entering the final transaction details such as the final sale price and date of completion. In an embodiment, an authorised person of the company 124 reviews the final transaction details provided by the service provider 116 to ensure/validate that the final transaction details provided are accurate. If the final transaction details provided by the service provider 116 are determined to be accurate by the authorised person in step 1424, the feedback survey will proceed to the third survey interval 1016 as shown in Fig. 10.

Fig. 15A illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1500 of the third survey interval 1016. As a first step 1502, a third feedback/rating request (S3) is sent to the customer 120. For illustration purposes only, Fig. 15B shows an example rating request sent to the customer 120 via mobile text messaging. Similarly, the rating may range from "0" to "5", with "1" meaning poor, "5" meaning excellent, and "0" meaning to exit the feedback survey. In steps 1504 and 1506, either the service provider 116 or the system administrator may terminate the feedback survey for various valid reasons as mentioned above. Upon termination, the feedback survey will end and be recorded/categorised in the database module 112 as terminated. Upon receiving the rating (R3) from the customer 120 in step 1512, the rating received is analysed in step 1514 and an error message is sent to the customer 120 should the value be outside the allowable range. After the rating is determined to be within the allowable range, the rating received is further analysed to determine whether it is "0" in step 1516. If so, the feedback survey will be terminated. Otherwise, the rating is deemed to be of an acceptable value and is stored in the database module 112. As a security measure, the rating received may be sent back to the customer 120 in step 1518 to provide confirmation of the rating received in the system 100. The survey details are updated by the system 100 and the action module 128 is then operable to prompt an action input from the service provider 116 as described with reference to Fig. 10 in step 1020.

In an embodiment, the system 100 is configured such that the feedback survey cannot be terminated by the service provider 116 once the rating for the predetermined survey interval (e.g., rating (R3) for the third survey interval 1016) has been received from the customer 120. This advantageously serves to avoid the service provider 116 from unfairly abusing the system 100 by, for example, terminating the response received at the predetermined interval if the response received is undesirable for the service provider 116. In another embodiment, the system 100 is configured such that the feedback survey cannot be terminated by the service provider 116 once feedback/rating request for the predetermined survey interval (e.g., third feedback/rating request (S3) for the third survey interval 1016) has been sent to customer 120. This advantageously serves to avoid the service provider 116 from unfairly abusing the system 100 by, for example, terminating the response received at the predetermined interval if an undesirable response is

expected to be received from the customer 120. In the case of the customer 120 being unresponsive to feedback survey, the system 100 or the system administrator may automatically terminate the feedback survey after a predetermined period of time.

Figs. 16A and 16B illustrate an example presentation of the details of the feedback survey for various stages. Fig. 16A illustrates the stage at step 1322 of Fig. 13A after the rating (R1) for the first survey interval 1006 has been received and the survey details updated. For example, as shown, survey details being updated may include, the status being updated from the "Pre-Sales" stage 1602 to the "During-Sales" stage 1604, the timestamp 1606 for the "Pre-Sales" stage 1602 being updated to reflect the time/date which the first rating (R1) was received from the customer 120, and the status bar 1608 being updated from "To be Activated" to "Active". The timestamp 1610 which the second rating request (S2) was sent to the customer 120 is also shown in Fig. 16A under "During-Sales" stage 1604. Fig. 16B illustrates the stage at step 1422 of Fig. 14A after the rating (R2) for the second survey interval has been received and the survey details updated. For example, as shown, the rating (R2) received for the "During-Sales" stage 1604 has been updated as well as the timestamp 1610 to reflect the time/date which the second rating was received from the customer 120.

In an embodiment, at the completion of each survey interval (i.e., once the response for the survey interval has been received), the system 100 is configured to send an email (or any other form of communication known in the art such as mobile text messaging and facsimile) containing the response(s) received and the above-described transaction details to the customer 120 for verification as a security measure. For illustration purposes only, Fig. 17 shows an example email which may be sent to the customer 120 at the completion of the first survey interval.

Fig. 18 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1800 of the first report type (e.g., simple report) generation process of the system 100 in the example for a service provider 116. As a first step 1804, the feedback received for the service provider 116, starting from the most recent, is analysed to determine the status of the feedback. In this regard, each feedback received is categorised in the database

module 112 according to its status. In an embodiment, the status includes one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status. The pending status indicates that the feedback survey is pending and not yet completed, the terminated status indicates that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status indicates that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status indicates that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

As described hereinbefore, the simple report is limited to a predetermined number of most recently completed feedback received (which has been completed with the accept action, i.e., the first complete status) for the service provider 116. In particular, feedback completed with the address action (i.e., the second complete status) is not included in the simple report. In the example shown in Fig. 18, the predetermined number of most recently completed feedback received is set to 10 as shown in step 1820. Accordingly, the process iterates through previous feedback received (starting from the most recent record and moving the next record 1822, and so on until the predetermined number is reached) to determine whether the feedback has a terminated status (in step 1806), has a second complete status (in step 1808), has a pending status (in step 1810), has a first complete status (in step 1812). If the feedback satisfies all the conditions in steps 1806 (i.e., not terminated status), 1808 (i.e., not second complete status), 1810 (i.e., not pending status) and 1812 (i.e., is of the first complete status), the feedback will be included in the simple report, along with simplified/reduced details of the customer 120 such as the initials of the customer's name (in step 1814) and the street name where the customer 120 resides (in step 1816). Once the number of feedback obtained reaches the predetermined number in step 1820, the simple report drawn is presented in step 1820. Fig. 11A illustrates an example simple report is shown in Fig. 11A as described hereinbefore.

Fig. 19 illustrates an exemplary schematic flow diagram 1900 of the second report type (e.g., detailed report) generation process of the system 100 in the example for a service provider 116. As described hereinbefore, the detailed report is configured to provide the full history of the feedback survey for the service provider 116, and an example detail report (partial) is shown in Fig. 11B. For example, the detailed report

shows all of the responses 1104, 1108, 1112 received for all the survey intervals of each completed feedback survey. Accordingly, the process iterates through all previous survey feedback recorded for the service provider 116 (e.g., starting from the most recent record and moving the next record 1914 until the final record is reached) to obtain the feedback information for presenting in the detailed report. In the example, the feedback information may include the feedback received, the survey status (in step 1904), the simplified/reduced details of the customer such as the initials of the customer's name (in step 1906) and the street name where the customer resides (in step 1908). Once all the feedback records for the service provider 116 has been analysed in step 1912, the detailed report may be presented in step 1916.

As an example, Fig. 20 illustrates all the feedback records (for services no. 1 to 21) for a service provider 116, along with their status. In this example, if the customer 120 for a new service at no. 22 request for a simple report, the simple report generated will include the feedback for services at no. 20, 19, 17, 16, 15, 13, 11, 10, 8 and 7, assuming that the 10 most recent feedbacks are to be included in the simple report and all the completed status are completed with the accept action (i.e., first complete status). Services at no. 21, 18, 14 and 9 are not included as they are still pending, while the service at no. 12 has been terminated. To illustrate the dynamic property of the simple report, assume now that the service at no. 18 has been completed. Upon a refresh/update request by the customer 120, the simple report will change so as to include the feedback for the service at no. 18 since this feedback will now be part of the 10 most recently completed feedbacks and the feedback for service no. 7 will be removed since this feedback will no longer be part of the 10 most recently completed feedbacks. This advantageously ensures that the customer 120 will always be able to obtain the most up-to-date feedback report on the service provider 116 upon request. In an embodiment, once there is no longer any pending feedback survey for the predetermined number of most recent feedback surveys (excluding terminated status and second complete status), the simple report may be referred to be in a crystallised/finalised or static status since no further changes/updates will occur in the simple report. In an embodiment, once the simple report is finalised, the simple report will be time stamped and emailed to the customer 120 to inform them that the simple report has been finalised.

Fig. 21 depicts an exemplary scenario for illustrating the locking mechanism as described hereinbefore. In this exemplary scenario, assume that customers A, B, C and D engaged the services of the service provider 116 at different times, and customers B, C and D have provided their second response (R2) for the second survey interval 1008. In addition, customers C and D have provided their third response (R3) for the third survey interval 1016, and the service provider 116 has accepted the third response from customer C but has not yet accepted the third response for customer D (i.e., action input outstanding for customer D). Supposedly, a new client E now engages the service of the service provider 116 and the service provider 116 wishes to initiate a new feedback survey with the new client E. However, since the system 100 is in the lock state for the service provider 116 (due to the outstanding action input for customer D), the new feedback survey request would be denied by the system 100 until all outstanding action input has been received. This serves to pressure the service provider 116 to complete all action input regardless of whether the response received is positive or negative. Without this locking mechanism, the service provider 116 may simply ignore the action input request if the response receive is negative in order to avoid the negative response from being recorded in the system. Therefore, the locking mechanism advantageously assists in enabling a fair and reliable way of managing customer feedback survey responses, as well as ensuring that any new clients will always have an up-to-date and accurate feedback report of the service provider 116.

As described hereinbefore, the service provider 116 is required to be linked/tagged to a company or an association 124 in order to participate in the system 100 and create new feedback surveys with customers 120. For example, a linking/tagging module 746 (see Fig. 7) may be provided for linking the service provider 116 to a company 124. In an embodiment, the linking module 746 is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending for the service provider 116 when the service provider 116 becomes untagged/unlinked from the company 124, except for the feedback survey(s) having outstanding action input (e.g., at R3) or where the predetermined survey interval (e.g., the third survey interval 1016) has been initiated (e.g., at S3). Such pending feedback survey(s) will be preserved and still requires an action input from the service provider 116 when the service provider 116 becomes

tagged/linked to a new company 124. Otherwise, the system 100 will be in the lock state for the service provider 116 even though he/she is now tagged to a new company 124. Furthermore, all completed feedback received for the service provider 116 is maintained in the database module 112. This advantageously prevents the service provider 116 from being able to exploit the system 100 by untagging to remove negative result(s) and retagging to start a fresh without the negative result(s), thus resulting in a fairer system. The above-described ability of the system 100 to maintain the pending feedback survey(s) having outstanding action input (e.g., at R3) is due to the presence of the locking mechanism as described herein. Without the locking mechanism, the service provider 116 may be able to exploit the system 100 by untagging from the company 124 to remove all pending survey feedbacks, including negative feedback obtained at the predetermined survey interval. This would unfairly result in the negative feedback not being recorded in the system 100.

In an embodiment, either the service provider 116 or the company 124 is able to untag from each other. However, the system 100 is configured such that the service provider 116 will be unable to commence any new feedback survey(s) until the service provider 116 is tagged to a new company. The service provider 116 may still login to the system 100 (but with reduced functionalities and viewing restrictions) and may complete any outstanding action input(s). For example, when the service provider 116 untags from a company 124, he/she will only have a restricted/partial view of the survey details completed while under the company 124, e.g., company privileged information such as sales history/records would not be viewable. Furthermore, if the service provider 116 joins and tags a new company, the new company will not be able to view the feedback surveys received for the service provider 116 when the service provider 116 was tagged to the previous company 124 for privacy concerns/protection. In the event that the service provider 116 re-joins the previous company 124, both the previous company 124 and the service provider 116 will have full access/view of the feedback surveys (and associated details) completed when the service provider 116 was previously with the company 124.

Accordingly, the system 100 and method 200 described herein according to embodiments of the present invention provide a fair and reliable manner of managing customer feedback survey responses. For example, each party (i.e., the customer 120, the service provider 116 and the company 124) participating in the system 100 and method 200 is verified in order to ensure reliability and accuracy. As described herein, the company 124 is verified by a third party system administrator, the service provider 116 is verified by the company 124, and the customer 120 is verified by the service provider 116. Furthermore, the transaction details entered by the service provider 116 are verified by the company 124 and the customer 120, and the survey feedback are returned to the customer 120 for verification. The fairness of the system 100 and method 200 described herein is provided by the locking mechanism as described herein. For example, with the locking mechanism, the service provider 116 is required or is forced to make an action input in reply to a response made by the customer 120 for the predetermined survey interval, such as either accepting the response as it is (e.g., a positive or agreeable response) and the response will be stored in the database module 112 or investigating the response (e.g., a negative or non-agreeable response) through the above-described investigation process. Otherwise, the system 100 (in particular, the feedback survey initialization module 104) is configured to be in the lock state which prevents any new feedback survey for another service provided by the particular service provider 116 from being initiated in the system 100. As mentioned hereinbefore, not being able to register new feedback surveys would be undesirable for the service provider 116 for a number of reasons. For example, the supervisor or manager of the service provider 116 (or any party interested in the feedback of the service provider such as an industry governing institution) would be aware of this status and would likely approach or question the service provider 116 if the service provider 116 does not make the action input to resolve this. The longer the period of time that this status is maintained, the greater the likelihood that the supervisor or manager will approach or question the service provider 116. Furthermore, the performance of the service provider 116 may be viewed more poorly in the case where the quantity and rating of the feedback surveys received are a measure of the performance of the service provider 116.

Furthermore, conventionally, a survey is provided to a customer after the end of a transaction with a service provider. Therefore, if problems/issues arise during the course of the transaction, there is no mechanism to detect or address this until after the end of the transaction when the feedback provided is negative and irreparable damages may have occurred. In contrast, according to embodiments of the present invention, a plurality of survey intervals is implemented for the service provided by the service provider 116, such as, an initial stage of the service may relate to a pre-sales period 1608 for securing a sale of the item of goods and/or services to the customer 120, an implementation stage may relate to an execution period 1604 for fulfilling the sale, and a final stage may relate to a completion period 1605 after the sale has been fulfilled (e.g., see Figs. 16A and 16B). It will be appreciated by a person skilled in the art that the present invention is not limited to three survey intervals and other number of survey intervals may be provided as desired/appropriate as long as there are multiple survey intervals. Accordingly, the system 100 according to embodiments of the present invention is advantageously able to detect problems/issues which may arise during the course of the transaction and provide the opportunity to take appropriate and prompt actions (e.g., by the service provider 116 or his supervisor) to address them (i.e., early intervention capabilities/mechanism).

The methods/processes of the example embodiments described herein may be implemented on a computer system 2200, schematically shown in Fig. 22. They may be implemented as software, such as a computer program being executed within the computer system 2200, and instructing the computer system 2200 to conduct the method of the example embodiment. The computer system 2200 comprises a computer module 2202, input modules such as a keyboard 2204 and mouse 2206 and a plurality of output devices such as a display 2208, and printer 2210. The computer module 2202 is connected to a computer network 2212 via a suitable transceiver device 2214, to enable access to e.g. the Internet or other network systems such as Local Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area Network (WAN). The computer module 2202 in the example includes a processor 2218, a Random Access Memory (RAM) 2220 and a Read Only Memory (ROM) 2222. The computer module 2202 also includes a number of Input/Output (I/O) interfaces, for example I/O interface 2224 to the display 2208, and I/O interface 2226 to the keyboard 2204.

The components of the computer module 2202 typically communicate via an interconnected bus 2228 and in a manner known to the person skilled in the relevant art.

The application program may be supplied to the user of the computer system 2200 encoded on a data storage medium such as a CD/DVD-ROM or flash memory carrier and read utilising a corresponding data storage medium drive of a data storage device 2230. The application program may also be supplied to the user of the computer system 2200 via a network such as the Internet, LAN, or WAN. The application program is read and controlled in its execution by the processor 2218. Intermediate storage of program data may be accomplished using RAM 2220.

In an embodiment, a computer program product is provided, embodied in a computer-readable storage medium 2230, comprising instructions executable by a computer processor 2218 to perform the method 200 for managing customer feedback survey responses as described hereinbefore.

It will be appreciated by a person skilled in the art that numerous variations and/or modifications may be made to the present disclosure as shown in the specific embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the disclosure as broadly described. The present embodiments are, therefore, to be considered in all respects to be illustrative and not restrictive.

The embodiments described in the following are at least similar to the above-described embodiments. For the sake of simplicity, same or similar components, modules, systems, devices, etc. have the same or similar names and/or reference numerals.

Fig. 23 shows an exemplary system for managing customer feedback survey responses according to an example embodiment of the present application;

Fig. 24 shows an example embodiment of a data record of the present application;

Fig. 25 shows an example report for a service professional that has used a customer survey response system of the present application; and

Fig. 26 shows a comparison of the numbers of ratings over time of the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application as compared with other techniques.

Fig. 23 shows an automated customer feedback system that comprises a computer system 3000 with a database for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records 3010 that are shown in Fig. 24. The database comprises a storage medium 136 and a processor 132.

The automated customer feedback system comprises a customer mobile communication device communication module 108, which is provided for sending customer feedback requests or rating requests 3020 and for receiving ratings 3021 from customers. A service professional and company computer communication module 104 is further provided for receiving service professional trigger messages 3030, service professional action messages 3090, and company endorsements 3081 as well as for sending service professional information messages 3070 and company endorsement requests 3081. A call-center communication module 4000 is provided for initiating a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center and a customer, by sending pre-determined data to a call center computer 4020.

Fig. 23 further shows at least one service professional computer 124, at least one company computer 124, at least one call center computer 4020 with a call center

communication device 4010 with a recording device 4030, and at least one telecommunication device 3095, which can use among others GPRS, SMS, or Wi-Fi protocols. The service professional computer 124, the company computer 124, the call center computer 4020, and the telecommunication device 3095 are communicating with the automated customer feedback system over a data network, such as the Internet. The service professional computer 124, the company computer 124, and the call-center computer 4020 are described in this document.

A customer communication device 120 is provided in the form of a mobile phone or a smartphone. The customer communication device 120 is adapted to communicate with the at least one telecommunication device 3095 over data protocols, such as GPRS, SMS, or WiFi. The customer communication device 120 is provided with a customer mobile device identity information 3060, which is attached to at least one data message which is outgoing from the customer communication device 120. In a very simple form, such as a mobile phone with SMS capacity, the customer mobile device identity information 3060 is provided in the form of a GSM phone number, which serves at the same time as a customer communication ID.

Once a direct communication between the customer communication device 120 and the call center communication device 4010 is established, possibly over a GSM network, the recording device 4030 will automatically record any spoken communication 4040 between a user of the customer communication device 120 and a user of the call center communication device 4010.

Turning now again to the structure of the automated customer feedback system, an action module 128 for evaluating ratings 3021, service professional trigger messages 3030, service professional action messages 3090, and company endorsements 3081 and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests 3020, service professional information messages 3070 and company endorsement requests 3081, depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding ratings 3021, service professional trigger messages 3030, service professional action messages 3090, and company endorsements 3081, is provided. The action module 128 therefore comprising sets of pre-determined text filters, especially for automatically classifying ratings 3021, service

professional trigger messages 3030, service professional action messages 3090, and company endorsements 3081.

The automated customer feedback system of the application further comprises a database module 112 for storing and updating at least one customer survey data record 3010, for storing sets of pre-determined message texts templates for rating requests 3020, service professional information messages 3070 and company endorsement requests 3081. As can be seen in Fig. 24, the at least one customer survey data record 3010 comprising a service professional ID 3043, a customer communication ID 3040, a customer identity ID 3041, and a lock information 3042, which prevents the data record (3010) from being published).

As can be seen in Fig. 23, the automated customer feedback system of the application further comprises an identity verification module 3050 for comparing a customer mobile device identity information 3060 in a received rating 3021 with a customer identity ID 3041 in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010).

The automated customer feedback system of the application can be used in various ways, providing corresponding features. According to one aspect, the automated customer feedback system of the application provides a very convenient and yet widely applicable customer feedback collection tool that allows for harvesting any potential anger at once. By providing a customer communication that can be established even with a simple mobile phone SMS message, most customers, even in a retiree age, are able to use such an intuitive feedback option. Other communication options provide digital messaging, such as Whatsapp, Skype, or any other digital messenger service, if the customer is provided with a digital ID certificate that makes sure that the feedback is harvested from the right customer and not from other fraudulent sources.

According to another aspect, the feedback from the customer will be published upon a corresponding confirmation by the rated service professional, by unlocking the lock information 3042 in the corresponding data record 3010. This makes sure that the published rating data will only show those ratings that comply with the intentions of the service professional. However, if the service professional desires so, more information can be provided for specific customers, to companies, or to the public, such as negative

customer ratings or even a recorded complaint phone call between the customer and the call center. This is why the automated customer feedback system of the application can be used as a sales success management tool.

In an embodiment of the application, the action module 128 would initiate the automatic creation of a customer survey data record 3010 upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1. This is described in detail e.g. on pages 28, line 32, to page 29, line 30, with reference to Fig. 12 of the present application, especially where is says “initiate sales rating by entering survey information and customer information”. This would be immediately followed by an automatic sending of a first rating request 3020/S1, “pre-sale”, using the previously entered customer communication ID 3040 of the corresponding data record 3010, see e.g. Fig. 13B and the description on page 30. As the automated customer feedback system of the application – among others – can use simple SMS messages for communicating with the customers, these will reply immediately with a short reply message, by pushing just one button of their mobile phone, such as “1” to “5”, according to their impression of the pre-sales service of the service professional, and followed by the “send” button of the mobile phone. Different from other customer feedback systems, the customer does not need to log into an Internet homepage or similar, which would delay or even totally prevent them from giving a customer feedback.

Upon reception of a first rating 3021/R1 (or 1312 in the earlier Figures), the action module 128 initiates the identity verification module 3050 for comparing the customer mobile device identity information 3060 in the received first rating 3021/R1 with the customer identity ID 3041 in the corresponding data record 3010. Depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating 3021/R1, the received text message would be classified by the text filters and the identity information would be compared in order to evaluate the first rating 3021/R1. A corresponding first service professional information message 3070/P1 would automatically be initiated to be sent out, and the first rating 3021/R1 would be stored in the corresponding data record 3010, see also the description e.g. on page 30 of the present application. As an option only, the action module 128 would automatically initiate the sending of a corresponding first emergency customer message to the customer and possibly also to the company, informing them of the first rating 3021/R1.

The service professional has then a possibility to directly interact with the customer and/or the company in order to investigate the motives for the first rating 3021/R1 and in order to rectify details of the service provided.

Once the service is provided to the customer, the action module 128 will - upon reception of a second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 (1422, "close request/delivered") and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 – automatically initiate sending of a company endorsement request 3080/ER to the company computer 124. This will include classifying the text message with the rating and comparing identity information, similar to what has been mentioned above for the first rating 3021/R.

Upon reception of a company endorsement 3081/E, depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement 3081/E, the action module 128 will initiate an automatic sending of a third rating request 3020/S3, using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040). This will include classifying the text message with the company endorsement 3081/E with the rating and comparing identity information, similar to what has been mentioned above for the first rating 3021/R1 and for the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2. While the identity information of the first rating 3021/R1 and the third rating 3021/R3 will be taken from the message sent by the customer, thereby allowing the use of a simple mobile device, the identity information of the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 and the company endorsement 3081/E may be used simply by using pre-determined email addresses or system accounts, e.g. if the automated customer feedback survey system is provided as a web application on a remote Internet server.

The reason why the automated customer feedback survey system foresees a company endorsement is that it creates an extra level of credibility in the collected data. The company would know best if the service professional is ready to trigger a sending of a third rating request 3020/S3 or not, thereby also endorsing the corresponding service professional with respect to the company.

In a further embodiment, as an add-on to a very simple form of the automated customer feedback survey system as described above, after the reception of a first rating 3021/R1 (1312) and before reception of a second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 (1422, "close request/delivered"), the action module 128 automatically initiates sending of a second rating request 3020/S2 (1402, "during sales"), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040). This is described e.g. on page 31 of the present application.

Such a second rating request 3020/S2 can be designed to be an automatic emergency function which does not necessarily request an immediate rating request. The customer can reply to the a second rating request 3020/S2 at any time after having sent out the first rating 3021/R1 and before receiving the third rating request 3020/S3 as mentioned above. Whenever the customer feels unhappy about the corresponding service professional or the service provided, he can initiate sending in a negative second rating 3021/R2 (1412) which expresses his immediate anger and unhappiness. Again, different from other customer feedback systems, the customer does not need to make a complicated phone call or log into an Internet homepage or similar, which would delay or even totally prevent them from giving a negative customer feedback. As the automated customer feedback system of the application– among others – can use simple SMS messages for communicating with the customers. An unhappy customer at this stage would retrieve the SMS, which contains the second rating request 3020/S2, and send out an immediate short reply message, by pushing just one button of their mobile phone, such as "1" to "5", according to their impression during sales service of the service professional, followed by the "send" button of the mobile phone.

Upon reception of a second rating 3021/R2, the action module 128 will automatically initiate the identity verification module 3050 for comparing a customer mobile device identity information 3060 in the received second rating 3021/R2 with the customer identity ID 3041 in the corresponding data record 3010, and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second rating 3021/R2, initiate an automatic sending of a second service professional information message 3070/P2, and storing of the second rating 3021/R2 in the corresponding data record 3010, see also e.g. page 31 of the present application. This will include classifying the text message with the second rating 3021/R2, similar to what has been mentioned above for the company endorsement

3081/E, first rating 3021/R1 and for the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2. While the identity information of the first rating 3021/R1, the second rating 3021/R2 and the third rating 3021/R3 will be taken from the message sent by the customer, thereby allowing the use of a simple mobile device, the identity information of the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 and the company endorsement 3081/E may be used simply by using pre-determined email addresses or system accounts, e.g. if the automated customer feedback survey system is provided as a web application on a remote Internet server.

As an additional option only, the action module 128 would automatically initiate the sending of a corresponding second emergency customer message to the customer and possibly also to the company, informing them of the second rating 3021/R2.

The provision of the option for the customer issuing a second rating 3021/R2 allows for an element of grace in the automated customer feedback survey system. The service professional can contact the customer upon receipt of the second rating 3021/R2 and find out about possible motives, especially if the second rating 3021/R2 is negative. After rectification of the reason for a negative second rating 3021/R2, chances are higher that the customer will issue a positive third rating 3021/R3. This provides also a higher overall happiness level of the customer and a means for providing improvements in the service delivery process. It should be noted that the term “service” in the present application does also include “goods”, as reasons for a negative rating can be found in goods that are provided together with a service, especially a sales service. Adding this extra second rating request also improves effectiveness of the system because customer complaint data is available at an early point in time, and on initiative of the customer and not by the company or by the service professional. This is useful if between purchase of product or service and delivery of the product or service there is an extended time.

Upon reception of a third rating 3021/R3, the action module 128 will automatically initiate the identity verification module 3050 for comparing a customer mobile device identity information 3060 in the received third rating 3021/R3 with the customer identity ID 3041 in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating 3021/R3, store third rating 3021/R2 in the corresponding customer survey

data record 3010, see, for example, page 32 of the present application, and automatically initiate sending of a second service professional information message 3070/P3 (“agree with R3?”).

This will include classifying the text message with the third rating 3021/R3 and comparing identity information, similar to what has been mentioned above for the first rating 3021/R1, for the second rating 3021/R2, for the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 and for the company endorsement 3081/E. The identity information of the first rating 3021/R1, the second rating 3021/R2 and the third rating 3021/R3 will be taken from the message sent by the customer, thereby allowing the use of a simple mobile device.

As an additional option only, the action module 128 would automatically initiate the sending of a corresponding second emergency customer message to the customer and possibly also to the company, informing them of the third rating 3021/R3.

The corresponding service professional can then issue a first positive service professional action message A1 (“publish”) / first completed status, depending on an automatic evaluation of the first service professional action message A1, which will cause the action module 128 to initiate the automatic removal of the lock information 3042 in the corresponding data record 3010. This in turn allows for a release of the content of at least part of the corresponding customer survey data record to a third party or to be posted online or for other publication purposes.

This will include classifying the message with the first service professional action message A1, similar to what has been mentioned above for the company endorsement 3081/E, first rating 3021/R1 and for the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2. The identity information of the first service professional action message A1, the second service professional trigger message 3030/T2 and the company endorsement 3081/E may be applied simply by using pre-determined email addresses or system accounts, e.g. if the automated customer feedback survey system is provided as a web application on a remote Internet server.

In another embodiment, in addition or as an alternative to the above described embodiment, the action module 128 would - upon reception of a R3 from existing clients, the system will set 'Pending Action' state and prevent automatic creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1, thereby blocking the action module 128 from initiating new sales rating actions with the corresponding customer. This provides a quality step in the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application, as the service professional is required to solve all third ratings 3021/R3, and especially those that he does not want to have published, before any new rating action can be initiated using the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application. The corresponding service professional may still continue to provide goods and services, he is just blocked from entering data which would automatically lead to a creation of a new customer survey data record 3010.

In still another embodiment, in addition or as an alternative to the above described embodiment - upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1) and depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1, "find out") – the action module 128 would initiate a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center communication device (4010) and the corresponding customer communication device (120). This helps to further improve the negative feedback harvesting efficiency of the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application. The customer who has used his mobile device 120 for sending a negative third rating 3021/R3 will without delay be brought in contact with a human voice to whom he can explain his motives to send a specific third rating 3021/R3. If the customer is using a mobile phone, such as a GSM phone, he can be contacted by a call center on that very device.

The automated customer feedback survey system according to the application provides hardware and software means that allow for taking care of customer unhappiness at the earliest time possible, when the unhappiness occurs. No human interaction is needed to trigger the necessary steps, once the respective unhappiness data has been collected. This provides for an enhanced performance of the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application as compared with other techniques, as shown in Fig. 26. Fig. 26 compares the numbers of ratings over time of the automated customer

feedback survey system according to the application as compared with other techniques. As one can see, the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application provides a much higher number of harvested customer feedback and also at an earlier time. Costs are much lower as expensive human actions as – apart from entering the input data into the automated customer feedback survey system – all actions are automatically provided by the automated customer feedback survey system, using pre-determined text message templates and text filters. The automation of the customer feedback survey system is closely linked with using pre-determined text message templates and text filters, as human evaluation steps of the ratings and the other messages are made obsolete and automatic classifications of the of the ratings and the other messages are applied.

Fig. 24 shows a data record 3010 in the database 112 for a completed sales transaction. The data record 3010 has a data record number of #001248, a service professional name 3043 of „Nelson Tan/鸟生蛋", a locked lock information 3042, a communication ID 3040 in the form of a mobile phone number "98327014", a customer identity ID 3041 "98327014", which is the same as the communication ID 3040. The customer ratings R1, R2 and R3 are "***", "***" and "****", respectively, corresponding to customer ratings "3", "3" and "4" sent earlier over his mobile phone. The object of the corresponding sales transaction was a car "BMW 745". The action message A1 entered by the sales professional was „find out", which triggered the above mentioned interaction between the call center and the customer. The call center found out that the client was unreasonable. The lock information 3042 is kept locked, as for all data records 3010 that have an action message A1 which is different from "publish".

Fig. 25 shows a list of sales transaction results as it can be provided from the database 112. The current list shows transactions for the service professional „Nelson Tan".

The first transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001248, for a BMW 745. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 4/3/4, respectively. The action message A1 is positive/"publish", which will lead to publication of this data record. In other words, the corresponding sales and delivery process has been completed, the result will be made public in a so-called "simple report" that is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated and in a so-called "detailed report" that is made

available to selected new clients for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 has been established and for whom the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to send the “detailed report”.

The second transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001273, for a BMW 6320. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 4/-/-, respectively. There is no action message A1 which will lead to this data record being blocked from publication, as the corresponding lock information 3042 is still locked. In other words, the corresponding sales and delivery process has not been completed, the result will not be made public in “simple reports” and “detailed reports”.

The third transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001301, for a BMW 640. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 3/2/4, respectively. The action message A1 is positive/”publish”, which will lead to publication of this data record. In other words, the corresponding sales and delivery process has been completed, the result will be made public in a so-called “simple report” that is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated and in a so-called “detailed report” that is made available to selected new clients for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 has been established and for whom the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to send the “detailed report”.

The fourth transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001407, for a BMW 730. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 3/2/1, respectively. The action message A1 is ”find out”, which lead to a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center and the corresponding customer having been established. His motives for his bad third rating of “1” were found to be not reasonable. The publication of this data record 001407 in the “simple report” for Nelson Tan is prevented, while it is still provided in the “detailed report”, from where it is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated, if the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to also send the “detailed report”.

The fifth transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001412, for a BMW 520. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 3/1/1, respectively. The action message A1 is ”find out”, which lead to a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center and the

corresponding customer having been established. His motives for his bad third rating of "1" were not yet found out, so that there is no entry in the field "result" yet. The publication of this data record 001407 in the "simple report" for Nelson Tan is prevented. In this state (R3 received with find out action), the action module 128 will permit automatic creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1. The service professional having solved the corresponding sales transaction of record 001407, new rating action /survey can be initiated using the automated customer feedback survey system according to the application. The corresponding service professional now can continue to provide goods and services, he would otherwise be blocked from entering data, which would automatically lead to a creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 and would not be able to validate his promises and claims made to the new customer.

The sixth transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001432, for a BMW 123. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 5/1/4, respectively. The action message A1 is positive/"publish", which will lead to publication of this data record. In other words, the corresponding sales and delivery process has been completed, the result will be made public in a so-called "simple report" that is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated and in a so-called "detailed report" that is made available to selected new clients for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 has been established and for whom the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to send the "detailed report".

The seventh transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001440, for a BMW 318. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 5/5/1, respectively. The action message A1 is "find out", which lead to a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center and the corresponding customer having been established. His motives for his bad third rating of "1" were found to be a scratched car, which is not the sales professional`s fault. The publication of this data record 001440 in the "simple report" for Nelson Tan is prevented, while it is still provided in the "detailed report", from where it is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated, if the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to also send the "detailed report".

The eighth transaction in Fig. 25 is taken from the record number 001441, for a BMW 520. The ratings R1/R2/R3 are 3/5/5, respectively. The action message A1 is positive/"publish", which will lead to publication of this data record. In other words, the corresponding sales and delivery process has been completed, the result will be made public in a so-called "simple report" that is made available to any new client for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 is initiated and in a so-called "detailed report" that is made available to selected new clients for whom a first rating receive 3021/R1 has been established and for whom the corresponding sales professional Nelson Tan has explicitly agreed to send the "detailed report".

According to the application, the action module 128 prevents automatic creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1, until the pending issue of data record number 001412 is solved, by entering a result into the respective field of the corresponding data record 3010.

In a next step not illustrated in Fig. 25, the pending issue of data record number 001412 is solved, by entering a result into the respective field of the corresponding data record 3010. In the following, the action module 128 allows automatic creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1.

In a next step not illustrated in Fig. 25, the action module 128 allows automatic creation of a new customer survey data record 3010 with a data record number of 001448, upon receiving a first service professional trigger message 3030/T1 for a new sales survey. The corresponding customer would then receive a rating receive 3021/R1, together with an email message which contains a "simple report" and – optionally – a "detailed report".

The simple report contains a number of currently published data records 3010, up to a first pre-determined report item number. For example, the first pre-determined report item number could be set to be 10, which means that the simple report would contain the most recent published data records 3010 for the same service professional, before the current data record 001448 of the new customer. In the present case, this would mean that the simple report contains the data records 001248, 001301, 001432, and 001441, because there are only these data records 3010 available for the corresponding sales

professional Nelson Tan. The new customer can also access the database 112 over a web browser and look for additional data records 3010 that change from a "locked" status to a "publish" status.

There would always be as many published data records 3010 as presently available in the database 112, in order to fill up the first pre-determined report item number. This means also that the simple report can dynamically over time change the data records 3010 taken up therein, as the number of published cases can increase over time. In the case of Fig. 25, if the first pre-determined report item number is set to "4", then the simple report sent via email to the new client which corresponds to the new data record 001448 contains the data records 001248, 001301, 001432, and 001441. If a short time later the case which corresponds to the data record 001273 becomes published by an affirmative action message of the sales professional Nelson Tan, and if the corresponding new customer for the data record 001448 accesses the web server of the application, the simple report which corresponds to the new data record 001448 contains the data records 001273, 001301, 001432, and 001441. In other words, the data record 1248 in the earlier simple report has been replaced by the data record 001273 in the new simple report, because the data record 001273, together with the data records 001301, 001432, and 001441, make up the first pre-determined report item number "4".

Such a simple report affirms the customer that he is in good hands with the sales professional Nelson Tan, as only published data records are available, which are approved by the respective sales professional.

Similar to the simple report, the detailed report contains also a number of data records 3010, up to a second pre-determined report item number. For example, the second pre-determined report item number could be set to be 8, which means that the detailed report would contain up to 8 currently published data records 3010 for the same service professional, before the current data record 001448 of the new customer. In the present case, this would mean that the detailed report contains the data records 001248, 001273, 001301, 001407, 001412, 001432, 001440, and 001441.

Different from the simple report, the data records 3010 in the detailed report will not dynamically change over time, as the detailed report will always show the same data

records 3010, up to a second pre-determined report item number, here the data records 001248, 001273, 001301, 001407, 001412, 001432, 001440 and 001441, even if there are more data records 3010 for the corresponding sales professional.

The new customer can in the following access the database 112 over a web browser and look for changes in the action message and result fields of these data records 001248, 001273, 001301, 001407, 001412, 001432, 001440 and 001441, according to the progress of the respective sales cases.

There would always be as many published data records 3010 as presently available in the database 112, in order to fill up the second pre-determined report item number. This means also that the data records 3010 shown in the detailed report can over time increase, if the number of cases is initially lower than the second pre-determined report item number. In the case of Fig. 25, if the second pre-determined report item number is set to “8”, then the detailed report sent via email to the new client which corresponds to the new data record 001448 contains these data records 001248, 001273, 001301, 001407, 001412, 001432, 001440 and 001441, of which the data record 001273 has empty fields “action message” and “result”. Please remember that different from what is shown in Fig. 25, the “result” field of the data record 001432 is filled, as this case has been resolved in the meantime as mentioned above. If a short time later the case which corresponds to the data record 001273 becomes published by an affirmative action message of the sales professional Nelson Tan or if this case becomes a sudden negative second rating R2 or if it even becomes disputed by a “find out” action message of the sales professional, and if the corresponding new customer for the data record 001448 accesses the web server of the application, the new customer would be highlighted to this development.

Such a development would affirm the customer that he is in good hands with the sales professional Nelson Tan, if the data in the field “result” is “published”, meaning being affirmed by the sales professional. It would also warn the customer at an early time that the sales professional might be inherently problematic, if the case receives a sudden negative rating R2.

It should be noted that the feature of the aforementioned detailed report is especially helpful in a three-stage process with three rating requests S1/S2/S3 and three ratings R1/R2/R3. There are cases in which a specific sales representative undergoes a sudden change in nature that would cause many cases to result in negative second ratings R2, potentially followed by a disputed action message. The customer can then initiate appropriate measurements, such as withdraw a deposit payment that has been paid at an earlier time.

It should further be noted that the feature of the aforementioned detailed report cannot be effectively provided by a human who would actively call customers for updating their current satisfaction values. The present system with the three-stage rating process, wherein the second rating R2 can be sent out by an unsatisfied customer any time after receiving the second rating request S2 provides an immediate trigger of corresponding measurements such as management interventions or sales professional support. If there would be an interaction required by a third party that provides customer feedback, such a process would not lead to a sufficiently quick result as the subject matter of the application.

The Detailed Report is special because it has the capability to share what other clients, who the professional is currently serving, is experiencing. The 'static' aspect of the detail report provides the customer the status of the same data records - different from the Simple report which shows only completed R3 - with Publish Action ratings. The 'dynamic' aspect of the Detailed Report lies in the change of the state of the data records. For example, assume the client sees a status of 10 data records / surveys that is on-going or active. If he then see that other clients are giving poor 'during-sales' results sales and 'after-sales' ratings for R2 and R3, he can then make a valid reason to stop work and stop payment that can lead to further loss. There is no other system available that provides the same advantages.

In a further embodiment not shown here, the state R3 leads to an intermediate state "Pending Action". Whenever there is a result of R3 being received from any clients, it enters into a "Pending Action" required status, requiring the professional to accept the ratings, which will result in 'Publish' or to reject the result, which will lead to a 'Findout'. If no Action is selected, no new surveys can be created. This "Lock State" of preventing

new surveys and reporting release is essential to provide continuous updated reviews for the next client. Without it, professional will accumulate negative/poor reviews ratings and as such the reports will be bias and not reflecting the professional current performance of the good and the bad reviews received from all other clients. Because of this "Lock-State", new clients cannot received the dynamic reports and will not be able to communicate their dissatisfaction to the management of the professionals via a touch of a button on their mobile device and make the professionals pay the price of initiating the price of investigating (Findout) and will be unable to register their dissatisfaction to the next clients that can adversely affect future business of the professional. In other words, this is a form of consumer protection to alert customers to be aware of the professional who is unable to produce track reference of his claims after he had won the client over and as such, when the professional is unable to initiate a dedicated report to the new client he will be pressured to conclude every R3 received quickly or face losing the business opportunity. The ultimate reason to provide this feature here is to relieve the ANGER OF THE CUSTOMER after receiving a bad sales performance from the professional.

This is superior to the existing solution of waiting for the customers to call in to the customer care helpdesk as this unique design of the system to "call out", instead of "wait to be called", to aggrieve client will allow the company management to capture the highest emotional dissatisfaction of the client. Different from the conventional system of client calling in to complaint, the new system provides an unexpected call from the call centre to the client. The client will be pleasantly surprise by the unexpected call and the answer of the client is much more truthful than the conventional case that can be staged or be planned regarding what to say. This result cannot be achieved without the use of an automatic computer system and pre-determined message routing.

If the customer should decide not to accept the call from the call centre, this give a good indication that the customer is not serious of its complaint or it could be an error of entering a wrong key. This will exonerate the professional and provide truth and allow management to form a response quicker and more objectively as everyone will have access to the customer's feedback. Conventionally, professionals will be prevented from speaking to the client as such may not receive a fair hearing and the professionals may even be dismissed. With objective access to the customer feedback, from a neutral

party, the client knowing this will not be able to push for compensation but to remain objective to the inquiry of his disaffection. Conventional system owned by the company may lead to unproductive conversation to pressure for compensation rather than addressing the issues.

Conventionally, should a professional alert his manager of the situation with the client, the manager may not be available to response quickly and as such delays may result in further detrainments and public relation problems should the client decides to go share this on social media environment to seek attention. With this system, the manager will be better prepared to address the issues instead of making two calls to find out and reply back. The manager will only need to make one call to address this as the points of matter has been taken in by the system shared by the professional with his manager.

In the further embodiment, the cost of the investigation by call centre can be borne by the professional and not by the company. This provides a more cost effective to handle complaints as compared to the conventional systems. Moreover, this gives incentive to the sales professional to provide a good sales service and seek help early to prevent incurring unnecessary cost. The further advantage is the outcome of the Findout – Investigation is owned by the professionals, which means no one can force him to handover the results of the investigation. This will provide a stage extended privacy to the sales professional.

With the new system, it is possible to tailor a specific training program for individual sales professional by evaluating the documented complaints of his customers we can now identify each sales professional common and specific complaints which can then be address by a specialized training for all or individual professional. In the conventional system, sales professional are sent to board or general sales training which addresses unspecific needs of sales persons.

The advantages that this system brings cannot be achieved by human action alone, the help of an automated computer system is a prerequisite for the proper function of the system.

In further embodiments of the application, automated customer feedback system provides an action module 128 that comprises sets of pre-determined deadlines for receiving service professional trigger messages, wherein the action module 128 is adapted to initiate automatic sending of at least one service professional reminder message, if the system did not receive a service professional reply message within a corresponding deadline.

The same applies to another embodiment in which the action module 128 comprises sets of pre-determined deadlines for receiving customer reply/rating messages, wherein the system management module is adapted to initiate automatic sending of at least one customer reminder message, using the customer communication ID, if the system did not receive a customer reply/rating message within a corresponding deadline.

The automatic deadline tracing provides further efficiency of the subject matter of the application.

In an automated customer feedback system, at least one mobile customer communication device communicates with the customer mobile device communication module, the customer mobile device comprising a keypad, a message text display, and a pre-determined identity information token, the mobile customer communication device being adapted to receive rating request messages and to send rating messages.

In a further embodiment, the at least one customer mobile communication device 120 comprises a manual or a mechanical alpha-numeric keypad, such as provided in a conventional mobile phone of the last century. As an alternative, the at least one customer mobile communication device 120 comprises a touch-sensitive display with icons that represent an alphanumeric keypad, such as that one of a conventional smart phone.

The identity information token of the mobile customer communication device 120 can be provided in a memory module, such as an IMEI number of a phone in a ROM memory or a phone number ID on a SIM card or a digital certificate in a RAM memory of a smartphone.

The mobile customer communication device 120 and the system of the application can further be provided with a GPRS/SMS/WiFi communication interface.

The present automated customer feedback system provides a documented track record of customer feedbacks for any service professional which uses this system. As it turned out in practice, the present automated customer feedback system highlights potential customer problems long before they can become contentious.

The present automated customer feedback system is a unique business platform that can be used both to measure sales performance, business performance and customer satisfaction. In the real world, one would provide the use of the present automated customer feedback system for free and only charge for investigations after a service professional has triggered a “find out“ action message A1. As he is the one who pays for the service of an independent call center, he would also rightfully possess the information which results from the investigation and he has the right whether to publish it or not. Excellent service professionals incur low or no costs at all. On the other hand, they obtain a powerful means to document their service efforts with clients. The company endorsement step in the sending of the third rating request R3 increases the trust in the system, as does the capturing of each system user`s identity. In case of an investigation, provision of the client related services by a third party, such as a certified call center, creates an extra level of credibility. These features makes the system of the application specially useful for measuring service quality, e.g. as a tool for measuring service excellence before applying alterations to existing business processes.

The subject matter of the application is in the following characterized by features lists, which can serve as an additional basis of disclosure.

1. Automated customer feedback system, comprising a computer system (3000) with

- a database (112, 136) for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- a customer mobile device communication module (108) for sending rating requests (3020) and for receiving ratings (3021),

- a service professional and company computer communication module (104) for receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- an action module (128) for evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), the action module (128) comprising pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),
- a database module (112) for storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),
- an identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010),

wherein the action module (128) is adapted to initiate

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),
- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010)
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010),
- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), initiating automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),

- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),
- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), initiating the automatic removal of the lock information (3042) in the corresponding data record (3010).

2. Automated customer feedback system, comprising a computer system (3000) with

- a database (112, 136) for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- a customer mobile device communication module (108) for sending rating requests (3020) and for receiving ratings (3021),
- a service professional and company computer communication module (104) for receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- an action module (128) for evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), the action module (128) comprising pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),
- a database module (112) for storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service

professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- an identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010),

wherein the action module (128) is adapted to initiate

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),
- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010),
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010) (P. 30),
- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), initiating automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),

- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1, “find out”), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), prevent automatic creation of a new customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030).

3. Automated customer feedback system, comprising a computer system (3000) with

- a database (112, 136) for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- a customer mobile device communication module (108) for sending rating requests (3020) and for receiving ratings (3021),
- a service professional and company computer communication module (104) for receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- a call-center communication module (4000) for initiating a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center communication device (4010) and a customer communication device (120),
- an action module (128) for evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), the action module (128) comprising pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),
- a database module (112) for storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),
- an identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010),

wherein the action module (128) is adapted to initiate

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),

- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010),
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010) (P. 30),
- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), initiating automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010) (P. 30), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),
- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), initiating a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center communication device (4010) and the corresponding customer communication device (120).

4. Automated customer feedback system according to item 3, comprising a call-center communication device 4010, wherein the call-center communication

device 4010 is provided with a recording device 4030 for recording and storing a communication with a customer.

5. Automated customer feedback system according to one of the aforementioned items, wherein after the reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), before reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, "close request/delivered"), the action module (128)
   - initiates automatic sending of a second rating request (3020, S2, 1402, "during sales"), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040).

6. Automated customer feedback system according to item 5, upon reception of a second rating (3021, R2, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received second rating (3021, R2, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412), initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (3070, P2), and storing of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010).

7. Automated customer feedback system according to one of the aforementioned items, wherein the evaluation module comprises pre-determined deadlines for receiving service professional trigger messages, wherein the system management module is adapted to initiate automatic sending of at least one service professional reminder message, if the system did not receive a service professional reply message within the corresponding deadline.

8. Automated customer feedback system according to one of the aforementioned items, wherein the evaluation module comprises pre-determined deadlines for receiving customer reply/rating messages, wherein the system management module is adapted to initiate automatic sending of at least one customer reminder message, using the customer communication ID, if the system did not receive a customer reply/rating message within the corresponding deadline.

9. Automated customer feedback system according to one of the aforementioned items, with at least one mobile customer communication device which communicates with the customer mobile device communication module, the customer mobile device comprising a keypad, a message text display, and a (pre-determined) identity information token, mobile customer communication device being adapted to receive customer trigger messages and to send customer survey messages.

10. Automated customer feedback system according to items 9, wherein the at least one customer mobile communication device comprises a manual/mechanical alpha-numeric keypad. (conventional mobile phone)

11. Automated customer feedback system according to items 9, wherein the at least one customer mobile communication device comprises a touch-sensitive display with icons that represent an alpha-numeric keypad. (smart phone)

12. Automated customer feedback system according to one of items 9 to 11, wherein the identity information token of the mobile customer communication device 120 is provided in a memory module (IMEI number of phone in ROM memory or phone number ID on SIM card or digital certificate in RAM memory).

13. Automated customer feedback system according to one of items 1 to 12, wherein a GPRS/SMS/WiFi communication interface is provided.

14. Method for providing an automated customer feedback, comprising
- automated creating, storing and updating of customer survey data records (3010),
- sending rating requests (3020) and receiving ratings (3021),
- receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- for evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and automatic sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), based on pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),

- automatic storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010),

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),
- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010)
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010),
- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), initiating automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding customer

survey data record (3010), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),

- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), initiating the automatic removal of the lock information (3042) in the corresponding data record (3010).

15. Method for providing an automated customer feedback, comprising

- automated for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),

- sending rating requests (3020) and receiving ratings (3021),

- receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),

- evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), using pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),

- storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010), for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010),

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),

- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010),

- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional

information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010) (P. 30),

- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010), and automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),
- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1, “find out”), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), preventing automatic creation of a new customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030).

16. Method for providing an automated customer feedback comprising

- automated creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- sending rating requests (3020) and receiving ratings (3021),
- receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- for initiating a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center communication device (4010) and a customer communication device (120),
- evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), using pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),

- storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010),

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),
- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010),
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010) (P. 30),
- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record

(3010) (P. 30), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),

- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), initiating a bi-directional direct communication between a call-center communication device (4010) and the corresponding customer communication device (120).

17. Method according to item 16, comprising a recording and storing of a communication with a customer.

18. Method according to one of the aforementioned items 14 to 17, wherein after the reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), before reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), automatic sending of a second rating request (3020, S2, 1402, “during sales”), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040) being provided.

19. Method according to item 18, wherein upon reception of a second rating (3021, R2, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received second rating (3021, R2, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412), automatic sending of a second service professional information message (3070, P2), and storing of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010).

20. Automated customer feedback system, comprising a computer system (3000) with

- a database (112, 136) for creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- a customer mobile device communication module (108) for sending rating requests (3020) and for receiving ratings (3021),
- a service professional and company computer communication module (104) for receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),

- an action module (128) for evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and for initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), the action module (128) comprising pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),

- a database module (112) for storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- an identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010),

wherein the action module (128) is adapted to initiate

- automatic creation of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),
- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010)
- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010),
- initiating automatic sending of a second rating request (3020, S2, 1402, “during sales”), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a second rating (3021, R2, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received second rating (3021, R2, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412),

initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (3070, P2), and storing of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010),

- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, "close request/delivered"), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), initiating automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),
- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), initiating automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010), and initiating automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, "agree with R3?"),
- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), initiating the automatic removal of the lock information (3042) in the corresponding data record (3010),
- providing a pre-determined number of data records (3010) in a list.

21. Method for providing an automated customer feedback,

- creating, storing and updating customer survey data records (3010),
- for sending rating requests (3020) and receiving ratings (3021),
- receiving service professional trigger messages (3030),
- evaluating service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021) and initiating sending of pre-determined rating requests (3020), depending on the outcome of evaluating corresponding professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021), using pre-determined text filters for automatically classifying service professional trigger messages (3030) and ratings (3021),

- storing and updating at least one customer survey data records (3010) for storing pre-determined message texts for rating requests (3020), the at least one customer survey data record (3010) comprising a service professional ID (3043), a customer communication ID (3040), a customer identity ID (3041), and a lock information (3042),

- comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in a received rating (3021) with a customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010),

- automatically creating of a customer survey data record (3010) upon receiving a first service professional trigger message (3030),

- automatic sending of a first rating request (3020, S1, “pre-sale”), using the customer communication ID (3040) of the corresponding data record (3010)

- upon reception of a first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing the customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received first rating (3021, R1, 1312) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312), initiating automatic sending of a first service professional information message (3070, P1), and storing of the first rating (3021, R1, 1312) in the corresponding data record (3010),

- automatic sending of a second rating request (3020, S2, 1402, “during sales”), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),

- upon reception of a second rating (3021, R2, 1412), comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received second rating (3021, R2, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412), automatic sending of a second service professional information message (3070, P2), and storing of the second rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding data record (3010),

- upon reception of a second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422, “close request/delivered”), depending on an automatic evaluation of the second service professional trigger message (3030, T2, 1422), automatic sending of a company endorsement request (3080, ER),

- upon reception of a company endorsement (3081, E), depending on an automatic evaluation of the company endorsement (3081, E), automatic sending of a third rating request(3020, S3), using the corresponding customer communication ID (3040),
- upon reception of a third rating (3021, R3, 1412), initiating the identity verification module (3050) for comparing a customer mobile device identity information (3060) in the received third rating (3021, R3, 1412) with the customer identity ID (3041) in the corresponding data record (3010), and depending on an automatic evaluation of the third rating (3021, R3, 1412), storing of the third rating (3021, R2, 1412) in the corresponding customer survey data record (3010), and automatic sending of a second service professional information message (P3, “agree with R3?”),
- upon reception of a first service professional action message (A1), depending on an automatic evaluation of first service professional action message (A1), automatic removal of the lock information (3042) in the corresponding data record (3010),
- providing a pre-determined number of data records (3010) in a list.

The embodiments can also be described with the following lists of features or elements being organized into an item list. The respective combinations of features, which are disclosed in the item list, are regarded as independent subject matter, respectively, that can also be combined with other features of the application.

1. A method for managing customer feedback survey responses, the method comprising:

receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service; and

receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals,

wherein the method is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

2. The method according to item 1, further comprising:

prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service; and

accepting the response received for the predetermined survey interval in a database or initiating an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider,

wherein the method is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

3. The method according to item 2, wherein the method is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

4. The method according to item 2 or 3, wherein the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the feedback received is stored in the database when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

5. The method according to any one of items 2 to 4, wherein the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

6. The method according to item 5, wherein the plurality of stages of the service comprises an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

7. The method according to item 6, wherein the initial stage of the service relates to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services to the customer, the implementation stage relates to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage relates to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

8. The method according to any one of items 4 to 7, further comprising categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

9. The method according to item 8, wherein the status comprises one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

10. The method according to item 9, further comprising generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of the feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

11. The method according to item 10, wherein the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received at the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

12. The method according to item 9, further comprising generating, upon request, a second type of feedback report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

13. The method according to any one of items 9 to 12, further comprising linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

14. A system for managing customer feedback survey responses, the system comprising:

a feedback survey initialization module for receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service;

a feedback receiving module for receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals; and

a database module for storing the feedback received from the customer,

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

15. The system according to item 14, further comprising:

an action module for prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service,

wherein the action module is operable to accept the response received for the predetermined survey interval in the database module or initiate an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider, and

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

16. The system according to item 15, wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

17. The system according to item 15 or 16, wherein the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the feedback received is stored in the database module when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

18. The system according to any one of items 15 to 17, wherein the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

19. The system according to item 18, wherein the plurality of stages of the service comprises an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the

service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

20. The system according to item 19, wherein the initial stage of the service relates to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services to the customer, the implementation stage relates to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage relates to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

21. The system according to any one of items 17 to 20, further comprising a categorising module for categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

22. The system according to item 22, wherein the status comprises one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

23. The system according to item 22, further comprising a first feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

24. The system according to item 23, wherein the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received for the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

25. The system according to item 22, further comprising a second feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a second type of feedback

report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

26. The system according to any one of items 23 to 25, further comprising a linking module for linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

27. A computer program product, embodied in a non-transitory computer-readable storage medium, comprising instructions executable by a computing processor to perform the method of any one of items 1 to 13.

CLAIMS

1. A method for managing customer feedback survey responses, the method comprising:

receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service; and

receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals,

wherein the method is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service; and

accepting the response received for the predetermined survey interval in a database or initiating an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider,

wherein the method is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the method is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the

feedback received is stored in the database when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the plurality of stages of the service comprises an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the initial stage of the service relates to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services to the customer, the implementation stage relates to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage relates to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

8. The method according to claim 4, further comprising categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the status comprises one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

10. The method according to claim 9, further comprising generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of the feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received at the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

12. The method according to claim 9, further comprising generating, upon request, a second type of feedback report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received at the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

13. The method according to claim 9, further comprising linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

14. A system for managing customer feedback survey responses, the system comprising:

a feedback survey initialization module for receiving, from a service provider, a request to initiate a feedback survey with a customer in relation to a service provided by the service provider, the feedback survey comprises a plurality of survey intervals, each survey interval being associated with a respective one of a plurality of stages of the service;

a feedback receiving module for receiving a feedback to the feedback survey from the customer, the feedback comprises responses received for the plurality of survey intervals; and

a database module for storing the feedback received from the customer,

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in a lock state for preventing a new feedback survey for another service provided by the service provider from being initiated based on a state of the feedback survey.

15. The system according to claim 14, further comprising:

an action module for prompting an action input from the service provider in reply to the response made by the customer for a predetermined survey interval for the service,

wherein the action module is operable to accept the response received for the predetermined survey interval in the database module or initiate an investigation process to investigate the response received for the predetermined survey interval based on the action input received from the service provider, and

wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to be in the lock state when said action input for the service provider is outstanding.

16. The system according to claim 15, wherein the feedback survey initialization module is configured to return to an open state from the lock state, the open state being capable of accepting a new feedback survey for another service by the service provider, when the action input from the service provider for the predetermined survey interval for the service is received.

17. The system according to claim 15, wherein the action input comprises an accept action for accepting the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval or an investigate action for investigating the response made by the customer for the predetermined survey interval, and wherein the feedback received is stored in the database module when the action input received is the accept action, and the investigation process is initiated when the action input received is the investigate action.

18. The system according to claim 15, wherein the predetermined survey interval is a final survey interval of the feedback survey.

19. The system according to claim 18, wherein the plurality of stages of the service comprises an initial stage of the service, an implementation stage of the service, and a final stage of the service, the final stage of the service being associated with the final survey interval of the feedback survey.

20. The system according to claim 19, wherein the initial stage of the service relates to a pre-sales period for securing a sale of an item of goods and/or services

to the customer, the implementation stage relates to an execution period for fulfilling the sale, and the final stage relates to a completion period after the sale has been fulfilled.

21. The system according to claim 17, further comprising a categorising module for categorising the feedback received for each feedback survey initiated by the service provider in the database according to its status.

22. The system according to claim 22, wherein the status comprises one of a pending status, a terminated status, a first complete status and a second complete status, the pending status for indicating that the feedback survey is pending, the terminated status for indicating that the feedback survey has been terminated before completion, the first complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the accept action, and the second complete status for indicating that the feedback survey has been completed with the address action.

23. The system according to claim 22, further comprising a first feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a first type of feedback report of the service provider, the first type of feedback report is based on a predetermined number of feedback received for the service provider having the first complete status.

24. The system according to claim 23, wherein the first type of feedback report comprises only the response received for the predetermined survey interval amongst the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

25. The system according to claim 22, further comprising a second feedback report generating module for generating, upon request, a second type of feedback report of the service provider, the second type of feedback report comprises all of the responses received for the plurality of survey intervals for each service provided by the service provider.

26. The system according to claim 23, further comprising a linking module for linking the service provider to a company or an association, wherein the method is configured to terminate any feedback survey that is pending except for pending feedback survey having said action input outstanding or when the predetermined survey interval for the service provided by the service provider has been initiated which are maintained.

27. A computer program product, embodied in a non-transitory computer-readable storage medium, comprising instructions executable by a computing processor to perform the method of claim 1.