CLAIMS

1. A device for controlling an operation, the device comprising:

a controller;

a storage means for storing electronic program instructions for controlling the controller; and

an input means;

wherein the controller is operable, under control of the electronic program instructions, to:

receive at least one instruction via the input means, the at least one instruction comprising a command associated with the operation; and

implement the operation according to the command.

2. The device of claim 1, further comprising an output means.

3. The device of claim 1 or 2, further comprising connection means for operably connecting and disconnecting the input means and/or the output means to the device.

4. The device of claim 3, wherein the input means and/or the output means comprise modules interchangeably connectable to the device.

5. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the controller comprises computer processing means, and the instruction comprises, or is converted by operation of the input means, into data or at least one signal for the computer processing means.

6. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the input means comprises at least one of: user input means, and the at least one instruction comprises at least one user instruction inputted by a user via the user input

means; and machine input means, operable to receive at least one instruction from a machine, device or system.

7. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the input means comprises one or more sensors operable to sense data relating to or associated with the operation, the instruction and/or the command and to communicate the sensed data to the controller.

8. The device of claim 4, wherein the data communicated comprises the instructions or command and/or a representation thereof.

9. The device of claim 2, or of any one of claims 3 to 8 when dependent on claim 2, wherein the output means comprises a display for displaying a user interface.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the display comprises at least one of: a static display; a dynamic display; a graphical display screen operable to be altered or updated electronically; an indication means comprising a visual indication provided by one or more light sources; a tactile indication provided by one or more tactile sources; and an aural indication provided by one or more aural sources.

11. The device of claim 9 or 10, wherein the display, user interface and input means are integrated, to allow for instructions to be inputted or received, and for output or feedback to be displayed.

12. The device of claim 11, wherein the integration comprises a touchscreen.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the touchscreen is implemented using Projected Capacitive Touch, Resistive Touch, and/or Inductive Touch technology.

14. The device of any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the output or feedback displayed comprises at least one of: a visual output including alphabetic characters, numeric characters, and/or graphics; a tactile output, and/or an aural output, or a combination thereof.

15. The device of any one of claims 9 to 14, wherein the display comprises a changeable fascia.

16. The device of any one of claims 9 to 15, wherein the display is protected by a removable cover.

17. The device of claim 16, wherein the cover is adapted to prohibit or mitigate to at least some extent retention and/or transmission of at least one pathogen.

18. The device of claim 17, wherein the adaption comprises making the cover smooth or substantially smooth.

19. The device of any one of claims 16 to 18, wherein the cover is fabricated from at least one of a plastic, glass, metal, and/or antibacterial material.

20. The device of claim 19, wherein the antibacterial material comprises inherently antibacterial silver ions.

21. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the operation comprises at least one of: a switching action; a signaling action; a recording action; a data logging action; and a power management action.

22. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the storage means is operable to store information or data associated with the operation.

23. The device of claim 22, when dependent on claim 9, wherein the controller is operable, under control of the electronic program instructions, to display a list of available information or data via the display, and the command comprises a selection of the available information or data from the list.

24. A method for controlling an operation, the method comprising:

storing electronic program instructions for controlling a controller; and

controlling the controller via the electronic program instructions, to:

receive at least one instruction via an input means, the at least one instruction comprising a command associated with the operation; and

implement the operation according to the command.

25. A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored instructions that, when executed by a computing means, causes the computing means to perform the method according to claim 24.

26. A computing means programmed to carry out the method according to claim 25.

27. A data signal including at least one instruction being capable of being received and interpreted by a computing system, wherein the instruction implements the method according to claim 26.

28. A system for controlling an operation comprising a device according to any one of claims 1 to 23.

CLAIMS

1. A device for controlling an operation, the device comprising:

a controller;

a storage means for storing electronic program instructions for controlling the controller; and

a first removable input means attachable to the device for controlling an operation;

wherein the controller is operable, under control of the electronic program instructions, to:

receive at least a first instruction via the first removable input means, the first instruction comprising a command associated with the operation; and

implement the operation according to the command;

wherein the first removable input means is adapted to be replaced with a second removable input means attachable to the device for controlling an operation; and

wherein the second removable input means is adapted to provide at least a second instruction to the controller, the second instruction comprising a second command associated with a second operation; and

implement the second operation according to the second command.

2. The device of claim 1, further comprising an output means.

3. The device of claim 1 or 2, further comprising connection means for operably connecting and disconnecting the first or second input means and/or the output means to the device.

4. The device of claim 3, wherein the first or second input means and/or the output means comprise modules interchangeably connectable to the device.

5. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the controller comprises computer processing means, and the instruction comprises, or is

converted by operation of the first or second input means, into data or at least one signal for the computer processing means.

6. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the first or second input means comprises at least one of: user input means, and the at least a first instruction comprises at least one user instruction inputted by a user via the user input means; and machine input means, operable to receive at least one instruction from a machine, device or system.

7. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the first or second input means comprises one or more sensors operable to sense data relating to or associated with the operation, the instruction and/or the command and to communicate the sensed data to the controller.

8. The device of claim 4, wherein the data communicated comprises the instructions or command and/or a representation thereof.

9. The device of claim 2, or any one of claims 3 to 8 when dependent on claim 2, wherein the output means comprises a display for displaying a user interface.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the display comprises at least one of: a static display; a dynamic display; a graphical display screen operable to be altered or updated electronically; an indication means comprising a visual indication provided by one or more light sources; a tactile indication provided by one or more tactile sources; and an aural indication provided by one or more aural sources.

11. The device of claim 9 or 10, wherein the display, user interface and first or second input means are integrated, to allow for instructions to be inputted or received, and for output or feedback to be displayed.

12. The device of claim 11, wherein the integration comprises a touchscreen.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the touchscreen is implemented using Projected Capacitive Touch, Resistive Touch, and/or Inductive Touch technology.

14. The device of any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the output or feedback displayed comprises at least one of: a visual output including alphabetic characters, numeric characters, and/or graphics; a tactile output, and/or an aural output, or a combination thereof.

15. The device of any one of claims 9 to 14, wherein the display comprises a changeable fascia.

16. The device of any one of claims 9 to 15, wherein the display is protected by a removable cover.

17. The device of claim 16, wherein the cover is adapted to prohibit or mitigate to at least some extent retention and/or transmission of at least one pathogen.

18. The device of claim 17, wherein the adaption comprises making the cover smooth or substantially smooth.

19. The device of any one of claims 16 to 18, wherein the cover is fabricated from at least one of a plastic, glass, metal, and/or antibacterial material.

20. The device of claim 19, wherein the antibacterial material comprises inherently antibacterial silver ions.

21. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the operation comprises at least one of: a switching action; a signaling action; a recording action; a data logging action; and a power management action.

22. The device of any one of the preceding claims, wherein the storage means is operable to store information or data associated with the operation.

23. The device of claim 22, when dependent on claim 9, wherein the controller is operable, under control of the electronic program instructions, to display a list of available information or data via the display, and the command comprises a selection of the available information or data from the list.

24. A method for controlling an operation, the method comprising:

storing electronic program instructions for controlling a controller; and

controlling the controller via the electronic program instructions, to:

receive at least a first instruction via a removable input means, the first instruction comprising a command associated with the operation; and

implement the operation according to the command;
wherein the first removable input means is adapted to be replaced with a second removable input means attachable to the device for controlling an operation; and
wherein the second removable input means is adapted to provide at least a second instruction to the controller, the second instruction comprising a second command associated with a second operation; and

implement the second operation according to the second command.

25. A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored instructions that, when executed by a computing means, causes the computing means to perform the method according to claim 24.

26. A computing means programmed to carry out the method according to claim 25.

27. A data signal including at least one instruction being capable of being received and interpreted by a computing system, wherein the instruction implements the method according to claim 26.

28. A system for controlling an operation comprising a device according to any one of claims 1 to 23.