CLAIMS:

1. An instant messaging system comprising

   an instant messaging server arranged to be connectable to at least one client device belonging to a user via Internet connection by using an identifier of the user;

   the client device installed with a software application thereon; and

   the software application operable to send an instant message to the instant messaging server for routing to an intended recipient via Internet connection in a default mode,

   wherein if the Internet connection is not available, the software application is operable to automatically generate a field comprising an access code and an identifier of the intended recipient to initiate a session, and send the instant message via the session using a session-based protocol to the instant messaging server for routing to the intended recipient.

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the session-based protocol is a USSD protocol.

3. The system according to claim 2, the software application arranged to initiate a USSD session automatically.

4. The system according to claim 3, wherein the software application initiates the USSD session automatically based on generating the field comprising the access code for accessing a USSD server and the identifier of the intended recipient.

5. The system according to claim 4, wherein the instant message is appended to the access code and the identifier of the intended recipient.

6. The system according to claim 1, wherein where the Internet connection and the session are not available, the software application is operable to convert the instant message to a regular text message.

7. The system according to claim 1, wherein a reply to the instant message is sent as a text message.

8. The system according to claim 7, wherein the reply to the instant message is billed at a premium rate, a fixed cost per message, or a bundled cost for a fixed number of messages.

9. The system according to claim 1, wherein the instant messaging server charges a flat daily fee for use of a USSD service.

10. A method for providing instant messaging service for at least one client device, wherein the at least one client device belonging to a user is connectable to an instant messaging server by using an identifier of the user, the method comprising the following steps:

sending an instant message from the at least one client device to the instant messaging server for routing to an intended recipient via Internet connection in a default mode;

if the Internet connection is not available, generating a field comprising an access code and an identifier of the intended recipient to initiate a session; and

sending the instant message via the session using a session-based protocol to the instant messaging server for routing to the intended recipient.

11. The method for instant messaging according to claim 10, wherein the session-based protocol is a USSD protocol.

12. The method for instant messaging according to claim 10, wherein the instant message is converted to a regular text message where the Internet connection and the session are not available.

13. The method for instant messaging according to claim 10, wherein a reply to the instant message is sent as a text message.

14. The method for instant messaging according to claim 13, wherein the reply to the instant message is billed at one of the following:

a premium rate, a fixed cost per message, or a bundled cost for a fixed number of messages.

15. A client device having a software application installed thereon, the software

application operable to send an instant message from the client device to an instant messaging server for routing to an intended recipient via Internet connection in a default mode,

wherein if the Internet connection is not available, the software application is further operable to automatically generate a field comprising an access code and an identifier of the intended recipient to initiate a session, and send the instant message via the session using a session-based protocol to the instant messaging server for routing to the intended recipient.

16. The client device according to claim 15, wherein the session-based protocol is a USSD protocol.

17. The client device according to claim 16, wherein the software application is arranged to initiate a USSD session automatically.

18. The client device according to claim 17, wherein the software application initiates the USSD session automatically based on generating the field comprising the access code for accessing a USSD server and the identifier of the intended recipient.

19. The client device according to claim 18, wherein the instant message is appended to the access code and the identifier of the intended recipient.