CLAIMS

1. An audiovisual access criterion updating method, for updating an audiovisual access criterion in an audiovisual access criterion managing device, the audiovisual access criterion managing device managing the audiovisual access criterion of a content signal, the audiovisual access criterion updating method comprising:

a step of receiving update information descriptive of update content of the audiovisual access criterion and identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device from a user by an updating code generating system;

a step of generating an updating code by the updating code generating system according to the update information and the identification information;

a step of receiving the updating code by the audiovisual access criterion managing device, the updating code being based on a manual input of the user sent with the updating code; and

a step of updating the audiovisual access criterion by the audiovisual access criterion managing device according to the updating code,

wherein the updating code includes a serial number indicative of a number of times the updating code has ever been generated, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device has a memory module for storing a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated, the step of updating the audiovisual access criterion compares the serial number with the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has

ever been updated and thereby determines whether to update the audiovisual access criterion.

2. The audiovisual access criterion updating method of claim 1, wherein the audiovisual access criterion managing device is a receiver for receiving the content signal, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device receives the updating code which the user manually inputs into the receiver.

3. The audiovisual access criterion updating method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the updating code involves generating the updating code inclusive of a serial number with different values in each instance of generating the updating code.

4. The audiovisual access criterion updating method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the updating code involves encoding the update information by a specific key possessed by the audiovisual access criterion managing device and shown by the identification information to thereby generate the updating code.

5. An updating code generating system, for generating an updating code for updating an audiovisual access criterion in an audiovisual access criterion managing device managing the audiovisual access criterion of a content signal, the updating code generating system comprising:

a billing device for performing billing according to the update information descriptive of update content of the audiovisual access criterion and received by a user, and identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device; and

an updating code generating device, which is a separate device from the billing device, for generating the updating code to be sent to the user by a

specific key possessed by the audiovisual access criterion managing device using the updating code,

wherein the updating code includes a serial number indicative of a number of times the updating code has ever been generated, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device has a memory module for storing a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated, and an audiovisual access criterion updating device for comparing the serial number with the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated and thereby determining whether to update the audiovisual access criterion.

6. An updating code generating device, for generating an updating code for updating an audiovisual access criterion in an audiovisual access criterion managing device managing the audiovisual access criterion of a content signal, the updating code generating device comprising:

a receiver for receiving update information descriptive of update content of the audiovisual access criterion from a user, and identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device; and

a code generator for generating the updating code to be sent to the user by encoding the update information by a specific key possessed by the audiovisual access criterion managing device and shown by the identification information,

wherein the updating code includes a serial number indicative of a number of times the updating code has ever been generated, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device has a memory module for storing a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been

updated, and an audiovisual access criterion updating device for comparing the serial number with the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated and thereby determining whether to update the audiovisual access criterion.

7. The updating code generating device of claim 6, wherein the code generator generates the updating code inclusive of a serial number with different values in each instance of generating the updating code.

8. An audiovisual access criterion managing device, adapted to send a key for decoding an encoded content signal to a receiver for receiving the encoded content signal when an audiovisual access criterion is met, the audiovisual access criterion managing device comprising:

an audiovisual access criterion updating device for updating the audiovisual access criterion according to an updating code which is manually input into the receiver by a user and corresponds to identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device and update content of the audiovisual access criterion,

wherein the updating code includes a serial number indicative of a number of times the updating code has ever been generated, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device has a memory module for storing a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated, the audiovisual access criterion updating device compares the serial number with the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated and thereby determines whether to update the audiovisual access criterion.

9. The audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 8, wherein the updating code is generated by an updating code generating system comprising:

a billing device for performing billing according to the update information descriptive of update content of the audiovisual access criterion and received by a user, and identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device; and

an updating code generating device, which is a separate device from the billing device, for generating the updating code to be sent to the user by a specific key possessed by the audiovisual access criterion managing device using the updating code.

10. The audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 8, wherein the updating code is generated by an updating code generating device comprising:

a receiver for receiving update information descriptive of update content of the audiovisual access criterion from a user, and identification information of the audiovisual access criterion managing device; and

a code generator for generating the updating code to be sent to the user by encoding the update information by a specific key possessed by the audiovisual access criterion managing device and shown by the identification information.

11. The audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 8, wherein the receiver receives date information about a distribution date of the encoded content signal, and the audiovisual access criterion updating device updates an audiovisual access deadline in the audiovisual access criterion according to the date information.

12. An audiovisual access criterion managing device, comprising:

a first receiver for receiving an updating code about extending an audiovisual access time period of a content signal by a specified time period, and

an audiovisual access criterion updating device for updating an audiovisual access deadline for the content signal according to a date of receiving the content signal for a first time and the specified time period after receiving the updating code,

wherein the updating code includes a serial number indicative of a number of times the updating code has ever been generated, and the audiovisual access criterion managing device has a memory module for storing a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated, the audiovisual access criterion updating device compares the serial number with the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated and thereby determines whether to update the audiovisual access criterion.

13. The audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 13, wherein the audiovisual access criterion managing device is a receiver for receiving the content signal, and the first receiver receives the updating code manually input into the receiver by the user.

14. The audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 13, further comprising a second receiver for receiving date information about a distribution date of the content signal, wherein the audiovisual access criterion updating device defines a date of receiving the content signal for a first time after having received the updating code according to the date information.

15. A content receiving system, comprising:

a receiver for receiving an encoded content signal and showing date information of a distribution date of the content signal; and

the audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 8;

wherein the audiovisual access criterion managing device sends a key for decoding the encoded content signal to the receiver when the audiovisual access criterion is met, as determined according to the date information,

wherein the receiver decodes the encoded content signal as soon as the key for decoding the content signal is sent.

16. A content receiving system, comprising:

a receiver for receiving an encoded content signal and showing date information of a distribution date of the content signal; and

the audiovisual access criterion managing device of claim 13;

wherein the audiovisual access criterion managing device sends a key for decoding the encoded content signal to the receiver when the audiovisual access criterion is met, as determined according to the date information,

wherein the receiver decodes the encoded content signal as soon as the key for decoding the content signal is sent.

17. A content distribution system, comprising: a broadcast device; a receiver; an IC card inserted into the receiver; a play device not having a tuner for processing a broadcast wave from the broadcast device; and an updating code generating system, wherein the broadcast device comprises:

a first encoder for encoding, by a first key, a content signal to generate an encoded content signal;

a second encoder for encoding, by a second key, the first key and date information descriptive of a distribution date of the content signal to generate first control information; and

a third encoder for encoding, by a third key in the IC card, the second key to generate second control information,

wherein the encoded content signal, the first control information and the second control information are transmitted to the receiver by the broadcast wave,

wherein the receiver comprises:

a tuner for processing the encoded content signal, the first control information and the second control information;

a first decoder for decoding the encoded content signal when the IC card sends the first key and thereby restoring the content signal; and

a first receiver for receiving an updating code manually input by a user, wherein the updating code is generated by encoding, with the third key, update content of an audiovisual access criterion and a serial number showing a number of times the updating code has ever been generated;

wherein the restored content signal is played by the play device,

the IC card comprises:

a second decoder for receiving the second control information through the receiver, decoding the second control information by the third key of the IC card, and thereby restoring the second key;

a third decoder for receiving the first control information through the receiver, decoding the first control information by the restored second key, and thereby restoring the first key and the date information;

an audiovisual access criterion setting device for setting an audiovisual access deadline of the content signal to a last day of a predetermined audiovisual access time period from a date indicated by the date information when the encoded content signal is received for a first time;

a deadline determining device for determining whether to send the first key by comparing the date indicated by the date information with the audiovisual access deadline when the encoded content signal is received;

an output device for sending the first key to the receiver when the determination is affirmative;

a fourth decoder for receiving the encoded updating code through the receiver and decoding the encoded updating code by the third key of the IC card;

a memory module for storing data about a number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated; and

an audiovisual access criterion updating device for updating the audiovisual access criterion according to the updating code and the date information when the number of times the audiovisual access criterion has ever been updated equals the serial number included in the updating code;

wherein the updating code generating system comprises:

a billing device for performing billing as soon as the updating code is generated; and

an updating code generating device for generating the updating code;

wherein the billing device comprises:

a second receiver for receiving update information descriptive of update content for the audiovisual access criterion and the IC card identification information from the user; and

a billing performing device for performing billing according to the update content;

the updating code generating device comprises:

a third receiver for receiving the update information and the identification information; and

a code generator for generating the updating code to be sent to the user by encoding the update information and the serial number with the third key possessed by the IC card and shown by the identification information.