CLAIMS

1. A method of conducting an electronic financial transaction over a payment network on behalf of a customer using a payment application stored in a mobile device of a facilitator, the method comprising:

receiving transaction details of the electronic financial transaction in the payment application from the customer;

generating a transaction request for the electronic financial transaction based on the transaction details received; and

forwarding the transaction request to a payment gateway for processing to carry out the electronic financial transaction over the payment network, the payment gateway having stored therein account details of a payment card linked to the facilitator from which funds are authorized to be deducted or to which funds are authorized to be credited based on the transaction request to pay for or receive funds from the electronic financial transaction on behalf of the customer in exchange for the facilitator receiving cash payment from or providing cash to the customer.

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

receiving an authentication code from the facilitator, and

forwarding the authentication code to the payment gateway for verifying the identity of the facilitator prior to the payment gateway executing the transaction request,

wherein the payment gateway having further stored therein a predetermined authentication code linked to the payment application for verification against the received authentication code.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the authentication code is a personal identification number (PIN) of the facilitator.

4. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the payment card is a debit card, a credit card or a prepaid card, and the account details linked to the facilitator comprise a debit card number, a credit card number or a prepaid card number and an expiry date.

~~5. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a payment transaction on behalf of the customer for an item of goods and/or services, and the transaction details received comprise details of the item of goods and/or services.~~

~~6. The method according to claim 5, wherein said details of the item comprise information indicative of a biller or a merchant of the item and a payment amount.~~

~~7. The method according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the payment application is operable to provide a list of participating billers and/or merchants for accepting payments through the payment application.~~

~~8. The method according to any one of claims 5 to 7, wherein a plurality of the payment cards is issued for an entity managing or owning a distribution network comprising a plurality of the facilitators, each facilitator being respectively linked with account details of a unique one of the plurality of payment cards from which funds are authorized to be deducted to pay for the item on behalf of the customer in exchange for the facilitator receiving cash payment from the customer.~~

~~9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the entity is one of a telecommunications company, an insurance company, a post office, a ticketing company and a convenience store.~~

~~10. The method according to any one of claims 5 to 9, wherein the item of goods and/or services is displayed on an online merchant's website, and the website is configured to provide a checkout option for accepting payment through the facilitator.~~

~~11. The method according to claim 10, wherein an acceptance mark is displayed on the website for informing the customer of the possibility of making payment through the facilitator.~~

~~12. The method according to claim 10 or 11, wherein upon checkout, the website is configured to provide the customer with a payment voucher comprising~~

~~information indicative of said details of the item of goods and/or services to be supplied to the facilitator for conducting the electronic payment transaction, the payment voucher being in the form of an electronic document and/or an electronic code comprising said details of the item.~~

~~13. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a funding transaction on behalf of the customer for a fund transfer from the customer to a recipient, and the transaction details received comprise details of the recipient and a transfer amount.~~

~~14. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a funding transaction on behalf of the customer for a cash-out transaction, and the transaction details received comprise details of the customer and a cash-out amount.~~

~~15~~1. A system for conducting an electronic financial transaction over a payment network on behalf of a customer, the system comprising:

a mobile device having stored therein a payment application for a facilitator to conduct the electronic financial transaction, the mobile device, under control of the payment application when executed, is operable to receive transaction details of the electronic financial transaction and generate a transaction request for the electronic financial transaction based on the transaction details received; and

a payment gateway operable to receive and process the transaction request, the payment gateway having stored therein account details of a payment card linked to the facilitator from which funds are authorized to be deducted or to which funds are authorized to be credited based on the transaction request to pay for or receive funds from the electronic financial transaction on behalf of the customer in exchange for the facilitator receiving cash payment from or providing cash to the customer, wherein both the deduction and crediting of the funds in the payment card is facilitated by the payment application.

~~16~~2. The system according to claim ~~15~~, wherein the mobile device is operable to prompt the facilitator to input an authentication code, and forward the received

authentication code to the payment gateway for verifying the identity of the facilitator prior to the payment gateway executing the transaction request, and

wherein the payment gateway is operable to store a predetermined authentication code linked to the payment application for verification against the received authentication code.

~~173~~. The system according to claim ~~15~~ 1 or ~~162~~, wherein the authentication code is a personal identification number (PIN) of the facilitator.

~~184~~. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~173~~, wherein the payment card is a debit card, a credit card, or a prepaid card, and the account details linked to the facilitator comprise a debit card number, a credit card number, or a prepaid card number, and an expiry date.

~~195~~. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~184~~, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a payment transaction on behalf of the customer for an item of goods and/or services, and the transaction details received comprise details of the item of goods and/or services.

~~206~~. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~195~~, wherein said details of the item comprise information indicative of a biller or a merchant of the item and a payment amount.

~~217~~. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~206~~, wherein the mobile device is operable to provide a list of participating billers and/or merchants for accepting payments through the payment application.

~~228~~. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~206~~, wherein a plurality of the payment cards is issued for an entity managing or owning a distribution network comprising a plurality of the facilitators, each facilitator being respectively linked with account details of a unique one of the plurality of payment cards from which funds are authorized to be deducted to pay for the item on behalf of the customer in exchange for cash payment from the customer.

~~23~~9. The system according to claim ~~22~~8, wherein the entity is one of a telecommunications company, an insurance company, a post office, a ticketing company and a convenience store.

~~24~~10. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~23~~9, wherein the item of goods and/or services is displayed on an online merchant's website, and the website is configured to provide a checkout option to accept payment through the facilitator.

~~25~~11. The system according to claim ~~24~~10, wherein an acceptance mark is displayed on the website for informing the customer of the possibility of making payment through the facilitator.

~~26~~12. The system according to claim ~~24~~ 10 or ~~25~~11, wherein upon checkout, the website is configured to provide the customer with a payment voucher comprising information indicative of said details of the item of goods and/or services to be supplied to the facilitator for conducting the electronic payment transaction, the payment voucher being in the form of an electronic document and/or an electronic code comprising said details of the item.

~~27~~13. The system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~18~~4, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a funding transaction on behalf of the customer for a fund transfer from the customer to a recipient, and the transaction details received comprise details of the recipient and a transfer amount.

~~28~~14. The ~~method~~ system according to any one of claims ~~15~~ 1 to ~~18~~4, wherein the electronic financial transaction comprises a funding transaction on behalf of the customer for a cash-out transaction, and the transaction details received comprise details of the customer and a cash-out amount.

~~29~~15. 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 claims 1 to 14~~ conducting an electronic financial transaction over a payment network on behalf of a customer

using a payment application stored in a mobile device of a facilitator, the method comprising:

receiving transaction details of the electronic financial transaction in the payment application from the customer;

generating a transaction request for the electronic financial transaction based on the transaction details received; and

forwarding the transaction request to a payment gateway for processing to carry out the electronic financial transaction over the payment network, the payment gateway having stored therein account details of a payment card linked to the facilitator from which funds are authorized to be deducted or to which funds are authorized to be credited based on the transaction request to pay for or receive funds from the electronic financial transaction on behalf of the customer in exchange for the facilitator receiving cash payment from or providing cash to the customer, wherein both the deduction and crediting of the funds in the payment card is facilitated by the payment application.