CLAIMS:

1. A hands-free fare collection system comprising:

a server running a software, which comprises a face recognition subroutine;

a commuter ID database for storing information comprising identification, name, gender, date of birth, race/ethnicity, height, privileges, wherein the commuter ID databaseis linked to the server;

a commuter account database for storing account information for commuters, wherein the commuter account database is linked to the server;

a gate for entry into or exit from a designated pay area delineated by the fare collection system; and

a multifunctional kiosk for enrolment of a commuter, where a camera captures a portrait of the commuter and the face recognition subroutine associates unique facial characteristics of the commuter with the customer identity, and the fare collection system stores commuter identity in the commuter ID and commuter account databases, so that after enrolment, the commuter can enter into or exit from within the designated pay area without having to carry a store value farecard.

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the commuter identities stored in the commuter ID database are categorized into name, gender, ethnic race, date of birth, height and privileged group to allow quick and accurate identification.

3. The system according to claim 2, wherein the privileged group comprises: children, senior citizens, disabled, students, national servicemen, tourists and staff.

4. The system according to claim 2, wherein the face recognition subroutine makes further categories in the commuter ID database, the further categories comprising a list of people wearing spectacles or a list of wanted or missing persons.

5. The system according to claim 1, wherein the server comprises a master server and a plurality of slave servers.

6. The system according to claim 5, wherein the master server and the slave servers are configured for parallel computing.

7. The system according to claim 5, wherein the master server and the slave servers are configured for grid computing.

8. The system according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a subroutine to interject a greeting to a commuter at the multi-functional kiosk, entry gate or exit gate, as a commuter identity is found in the ID database.

9. The system according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the gate for entry or exit is barrier-free.

10. The system according to claim 9, wherein the commuter or customer who triggered a system fault is identified by a beam tracer, highlighted on a monitor screen or highlighted in an augmented reality (AR) glasses worn by a system controller.

11. The system according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the gate comprises a pair of long range RF detectors.

12. The system according to any one of claim 9-11, wherein the gate is deployed for use at a mass transit station, bus, stadium, concert hall, or passenger lobby at an arrival or departure hall.

13. The system according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein a display screen of the multi-functional kiosk is operable to display an advertising or information screen and an operating menu screen upon presence of a commuter as detected by the camera.

14. The system according to claim 13, wherein there is a plurality of multi-functional kiosks, each placed side by side to one another, and the advertising or information screen is dynamically composed of two or more display screens upon non-presence of a commuter within a predetermined range.

15. The system according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a touch screen and a keyboard, both being disposed behind the multi-functional kiosk for a commuter to assess the internet.