SUBSCRIPTION-BASED ACCESS TO MEDIA PROGRAMS DISTRIBUTED BY WAY OF A PLURALITY OF DIFFERENT MEDIA DISTRIBUTION MODELS

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ABSTRACT

An exemplary system 1) provides, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel, 2) issues, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a physical copy of a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel, and 3) provides at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the physical copy of the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model. Corresponding systems and methods are also described.
Fig. 1
Fig. 2
Fig. 4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account</th>
<th>MOVIES, TV SHOWS, GAMES</th>
<th>My Account • Help-Logout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1212 Broadway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, NY 10001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Name stormtrug1!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Password:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Credit Card</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Amex:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0504 (Primary for subscription)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Disc:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1221 (Primary for rentals and purchase)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Work:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3224</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find a Location</th>
<th>MOVIES, TV SHOWS, GAMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hi, Joe! You have 10 free rental credits</td>
<td>My Redbox Kiosks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have 10 credits available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 credits expire in 1 day 10/31/11</td>
<td>1 credit expire in 7 days 11/07/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Promotions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dell</th>
<th>Monopoly</th>
<th>Tozzo's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Password Prompt**

Would you like to ask for your password when a purchase is made on your credit card? (Not applicable for kiosk transactions)

Yes
No

**Save**
### Account Summary

- **Credits**: 3 remaining (refresh on 11/11/11)
- **Activity**: Card ending 5194 charged on 10/13/11 (new)
- **Account Type**: Premium ($8 monthly) + Blu-Ray credits ($1...)

### Credit Cards

- **Card 1**: XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-5194 Exp 12/12 Primary
- **Card 2**: XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-2252 Exp 01/13

### About You

- **First Name**: Brian
- **Last Name**: Roberts
- **Login Email**: beezus@gmail.com
- **Password**: **********
- **Confirm Password**: **********

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**Fig. 6**
Confirm Checkout

700

Select Card:
Personal Visa * * * 1234
Use Credits (3 Credits Remaining)

702-1
702-2
Cover Art
Cover Art
EMPTY

704-1
704-2
DVD
DVD
$1.20 first day
$1.20 extra days
$1.20 first day
$1.20 extra days

708-1
708-2
ADD MOVIE
ADD GAME

Make it a Double Feature!
Reserve another DVD for only $6.00
See even more movies

710

Pick-Up Location:
Walgreens (Indoor)
324 Roosevelt Rd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

706

Payment Summary:
Subtotal $2.40
Credit(s) Used $2.40
Tax $0.00
Total $0.00

Restrictions apply. Subscription credits can’t be used for Video Games, Digital Rentals or Purchases. To use credits for Blu-ray discs, a subscription upgrade is required.

718
Secure Credit Card Payment

RESERVE NOW

720

Fig. 7
Thank You! Your titles are ready for pickup!

Pick-Up Location:
Walgreens (Indoor)
324 Roosevelt Rd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Pickup Information
Title will be held until 9pm tonight. First rental ends 11/15/11. Please bring the Credit Card ending in 1234 to pickup your rental.

Fig. 8
Fig. 9
Your reservation is waiting for you at the location below. You need to pick it up by 9pm tomorrow night or it will become available for another customer to rent and your credit card will be charged for a 1-night rental.

7-Eleven (Outdoor)
3310 Abrams, Dallas, TX 75223

2 credits remain

More suggestions at this location

Fig. 10
Fig. 11
MY CART

Cover Art

+ ADD MOVIE

+ ADD GAME

$1.27 a day

NEW!

*Daily rental charges include applicable tax. Discs kept after 9 p.m. the next day, and each day after, are subject to additional daily rental charges. If you keep a disc for the maximum rental period, it's yours to keep, and no further charges apply. See complete Terms for the rules for renting from Redbox. Maximum rental period: DVD (20 days), Blu-ray® (23 days), Games (30 days).

Fig. 12

redbox

Terms & Privacy

Promo Code

TOTAL: $1.27

PAY ($1.27)

By pressing 'PAY' or 'USE CREDITS' you agree to the Terms.
Ready: Set. Swipe!

Want to pay with credits? Please swipe a credit card that’s associated with your online account.
Hi JOE,
You're using 2 of 10 credits.

Available credits will be applied each night for this transaction. Your credit card will be charged once your credits run out.

Subtotal: $2.00
Tax: $0.00
New Total: $2.00

(you'll have 8 credits after this)

Restrictions apply. Some credits can't be used for games, purchases, or Blu-ray Discs. Review your credits at redbox.com/account.
You have reached the maximum number of devices authenticated for playback on your account. To view content on this device, you must remove another previously authenticated device.

Select a previous device to replace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Activation Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xbox</td>
<td>Activated on 8/15/12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Replace with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Tap to change name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iPad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CANCEL  SAVE CHANGES
Fig. 16

Current Devices

- Xbox: Activated on 8/15/12
- Samsung: Activated on 9/06/12
- Samsung: Activated on 9/21/12
- iPhone (BriPhone): Activated on 10/31/12
- iPad (ShannyPad): Activated on 11/11/12
Providing, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model

Issuing, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model

Providing a notification about the subscription credit

Providing at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model

Applying the subscription credit as payment in the transaction

End
1800 Start

1802 Providing, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model

1804 Issuing, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model

1806 Detecting a user request to complete a transaction to access the media program

1808 Determining that the subscription credit is available

1810 Determining that the media program is eligible for payment by the subscription credit

1812 Providing, in a checkout view of a user interface, a credit selection tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in the transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model

End Fig. 18
Fig. 19
SUBSCRIPTION-BASED ACCESS TO MEDIA PROGRAMS DISTRIBUTED BY WAY OF A PLURALITY OF DIFFERENT MEDIA DISTRIBUTION MODELS

RELATED APPLICATIONS


BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[0002] There are diverse ways for people to find and consume media programs. For example, a person wanting to watch a movie may utilize a traditional video distribution service such as a video rental or purchase service ("video service") to find, access, and watch a movie. The video service may allow the person to rent or purchase a physical copy of the movie from a local video store or video vending kiosk, or to rent or purchase a digital copy of the movie through an online video service, which may stream or download the digital copy of the movie to a user computing device for playback to the user.

[0003] Such a video service typically provides a user of the service with tools for accessing video programs offered through the video service. While such conventional tools are useful, there remains room for new and/or improved tools that may further benefit users and/or provide of the video service. For example, there remains room to provide users of a video service with new and/or additional options and/or tools for accessing video programs offered through the video service.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] The accompanying drawings illustrate various embodiments and are a part of the specification. The illustrated embodiments are merely examples and do not limit the scope of the disclosure. Throughout the drawings, identical or similar reference numbers designate identical or similar elements.

[0005] FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary media service provider system according to principles described herein.

[0006] FIG. 2 illustrates an exemplary media programs distribution configuration according to principles described herein.

[0007] FIG. 3 illustrates a configuration in which a subscriber to a media service is provided with subscription-type and transactional-type access to media programs based on a subscription of the subscriber to the media service according to principles described herein.

[0008] FIG. 4 illustrates a table representing an exemplary set of different media distribution models by way of which access to media programs may be provided by way of a media service according to principles described herein.

[0009] FIGS. 5-16 illustrate exemplary views of user interfaces according to principles described herein.

[0010] FIGS. 17-18 illustrate exemplary methods of subscription-based access to media programs according to principles described herein.

[0011] FIG. 19 illustrates an exemplary computing device according to principles described herein.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0012] Exemplary systems and methods of subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a plurality of different media distribution models are described herein. In certain examples, systems and methods described herein may provide a subscriber to a media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model and media programs distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model. Subscription-based access to the media programs distributed by way of the transactional-based media distribution model may be facilitated by way of subscription credits issued to the subscriber as part of the subscription.

[0013] For example, an exemplary system may 1) provide, based on a subscription of a user (also referred to herein as a “subscriber”) to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel, 2) issue, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a physical copy of a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel, and 3) provide at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the physical copy of the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model.

[0014] The systems and methods described herein may benefit end users and/or a provider of a media service. For example, one or more of the features described herein may provide a subscriber to a media service with options for accessing media programs by way of a transactional-based media distribution model. This and other benefits and/or advantages that may be provided by systems and methods described herein will be made apparent by the following detailed description. Exemplary systems and methods of subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a plurality of different media distribution models will now be described in reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0015] FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary media service provider system 100 (“system 100”). System 100 may be configured to facilitate discovery, access, and/or consumption of media programs by one or more users. For example, system 100 may be configured to provide a media service 102 (e.g., a media distribution service) to one or more end users of the media service 102 (e.g., one or more subscribers to the media service 102). System 100 may be associated with (e.g., operated by) a provider of the media service 102 (“service provider”). Through the media service 102, an end user of the media service may discover, access, and/or consume media programs distributed by system 100.

[0016] In certain examples, the media service 102 may be an integrated media service 102 at least because the media service 102 distributes media programs by way of multiple different media distribution models, thus providing an end user of the media service 102 with access to media programs by way of multiple different media distribution models. Examples of media distribution models associated with the media service 102 are described herein.
As used herein, the term “media program” may refer to any discrete instance of media content that may be distributed by the media service 102 for consumption by an end user of the media service 102. For example, a media program may refer to any television program, on-demand media program, pay-per-view media program, broadcast media program (e.g., broadcast television program), multicast media program (e.g., multicast television program), narrowcast media program (e.g., narrowcast video-on-demand program), Internet Protocol television (“IPTV”) media program, advertisement, video, movie, audio program, radio program, video game, or any other media program that a user may access by way of the media service 102. Such media programs that are made available for user consumption by way of the media service 102 may be accessed and/or played back by an appropriately configured user computing device (e.g., a media player device) for presentation to the user.

As shown in FIG. 1, system 100 may include, without limitation, a media distribution facility 104 (“distribution facility 104”), a subscription management facility 106 (“subscription facility 106”), and a storage facility 108 selectively and communicatively coupled to one another. The facilities may be communicatively coupled one to another by any suitable communication technologies.

It will be recognized that although facilities 104-108 are shown to be separate facilities in FIG. 1, any of these facilities may be combined into a single facility or split into additional facilities as may serve a particular implementation. Additionally or alternatively, one or more of the facilities 104-108 may be omitted from and external to system 100 in other implementations. For example, distribution facility 104 and/or storage facility 108 may be external of and communicatively coupled to system 100 in certain alternative implementations. Facilities 104-108 will now be described in more detail.

Storage facility 108 may be configured to store media program data 110 representative of content of and/or information about media programs that may be distributed by distribution facility 104 and subscription data 112 representative of subscription information (e.g., subscription account settings) generated and/or used by subscription facility 106 for subscription-based access to media programs distributed by distribution facility 104, such as described herein. Storage facility 108 may maintain additional or alternative data as may serve a particular implementation.

Distribution facility 104 may be configured to distribute media programs to users of the media service 102. Distribution facility 104 may be configured to distribute media programs in any way and/or form suitable to facilitate consumption of the media programs by users of the media service 102.

In certain examples, distribution facility 104 may be configured to distribute media programs by way of multiple different media program distribution channels. For example, distribution facility 104 may be configured to distribute media programs by way of a digital media distribution channel and a physical media distribution channel. The digital media distribution channel may include on-demand streaming and/or downloading of data representative of the media programs from a media service provider server system to one or more user computing systems by way of a network (e.g., an Internet Protocol (“IP”) wide area network such as the Internet). The physical media distribution channel may include distribution of physical media that hold data representative of the media programs. For example, the physical media distribution channel may include a media vending kiosk-based distribution channel through which physical media, such as digital versatile discs (“DVDs”), BLU-RAY discs, and/or other physical computer-readable copies of media programs are distributed to users of the media service 102.

FIG. 2 illustrates exemplary media programs distribution configuration 200 in which system 100 is implemented. Components of system 100 may be implemented by one or more of the elements of the configuration 200 shown in FIG. 2. As shown, the configuration 200 may include a user computing system 202 associated with a user 204, who may be an end user of the media service 102. User computing system 202 may be in communication with a media service server system 206 (“server system 206”), which may include one or more computing devices (e.g., server devices) remotely located from user computing system 202 and/or operated by a provider of the media service 102.

User computing system 202 and server system 206 may communicate using any communication platforms and technologies suitable for transporting data (e.g., media program data) and/or communication signals, including known communication technologies, devices, media, and protocols supportive of remote communications, examples of which include, but are not limited to, data transmission media, communications devices, Transmission Control Protocol (“TCP”), Internet Protocol (“IP”), Hypertext Transfer Protocol (“HTTP”), Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (“HTTPS”), Session Initiation Protocol (“SIP”), Simple Object Access Protocol (“SOAP”), Extensible Mark-up Language (“XML”) and variations thereof, Real-Time Transport Protocol (“RTP”), User Datagram Protocol (“UDP”), Global System for Mobile Communications (“GSM”) technologies, Short Message Service (“SMS”), Multimedia Messaging Service (“MMS”), local area networks, and any other networks capable of carrying data (e.g., streaming and/or downloading media programs) and/or communications signals between user computing system 202 and server system 206.

In certain embodiments, user computing system 202 and server system 206 may communicate via a network 208. Network 208 may include one or more networks, such as one or more wireless networks (Wi-Fi networks), wireless communication networks, mobile telephone networks (e.g., cellular telephone networks), closed media networks, open media networks, closed communication networks, open communication networks, wired area networks (e.g., the Internet), local area networks, and any other networks capable of carrying data (e.g., streaming and/or downloading media programs) and/or communications signals between user computing system 202 and server system 206. Communications between user computing system 202 and server system 206 may be transported using any one of the above-listed networks, or any combination of sub-combination of the above-listed networks. Alternatively, user computing system 202 and server system 206 may communicate in another way such as by direct connections between user computing system 202 and server system 206.

The configuration 200 may support distribution of media programs, through the media service 102, by way of multiple different media distribution channels, such as a digital media distribution channel and a physical media distribu-
tion channel. As shown, server system 206 may distribute media programs such as digital data 210 representative of a media program to user computing system 202 by way of a digital media distribution channel 212. This distribution may utilize any suitable media streaming and/or downloading technologies (e.g., Internet media streaming and/or downloading technologies) to support delivery of digital data representative of media programs to user computing system 202 by way of network 208.

[0027] As further shown in FIG. 2, server system 206 may be in communication with a media vending kiosk system 214, which may include one or more geographically distributed vending kiosks 216 (e.g., vending kiosks 216-1 and 216-2) configured to vend physical copies of media programs, such as a physical copy 218 of a media program, to user 204 by way of a physical media distribution channel 220. For example, user 204 may visit a location of media vending kiosk 216-1 and obtain the physical copy 218 of the media program from the media vending kiosk 216-1. In certain examples, one or more of the vending kiosks 216 may include automated media vending machines.

[0028] The user computing system 202 may be configured for use by the user 204 to access the media service 102 provided by system 100. For example, the user 204 may utilize the user computing system 202 to access one or more user interfaces provided by system 100 as part of the media service 102, and to present the user interfaces for use by the user 204 to discover, access, and/or consume media programs distributed by way of the digital media distribution channel 212 and/or the physical media distribution channel 220 as part of the media service 102.

[0029] The user computing system 202 may include one or more user computing devices associated with (e.g., operated by) the user 204. Examples of such devices include, without limitation, a media player computing device (e.g., a media disc player device such as a DVD or BLU-RAY disc player device), a display device, a set-top box device, a digital video recording (“DVR”) device, a computer, a tablet computer, a smart phone device, a gaming console, and any other device capable of accessing the media service 102 and/or media programs provided by system 100 by way of the media service 102.

[0030] In certain examples, the user computing system 202 may include a first user computing device (e.g., a primary display device) configured to playback media programs and a second user computing device (e.g., a secondary or companion display device) configured to display a graphical user interface that may compliment or be used together with the playback of the media programs by the first user computing device. For instance, a television may provide a primary display screen on which a video program may be displayed, and a tablet computer may provide a secondary display screen on which a graphical user interface (e.g., a graphical user interface related to the video program, the playback of the video program, and/or the media service 102) may be displayed. Such an example is illustrative only. Other examples of user computing system 202 may include any combination of user computing devices or a single user computing device configured to perform any of the user computing system and/or device operations described herein.

[0031] Returning to FIG. 1, in certain examples, distribution facility 104 may be configured to provide users of the media service 102 with access to media programs by way of a plurality of different media distribution models (“distribution models”). Each distribution model may define a particular way that an end user of the media service 102 may gain access to media programs through the media service 102. Thus, a user of the media service 102 may be able to gain access to media programs by way of multiple different distribution models.

[0032] In certain examples, the distribution models may include multiple distribution channel-based models such as a digital media distribution model that corresponds to a digital media distribution channel and a physical media distribution model that corresponds to a physical media distribution channel. For example, a digital media programs distribution model may include and/or utilize the digital media distribution channel 212 of FIG. 2, and a physical media distribution model may include or utilize the physical media distribution channel 220 of FIG. 2.

[0033] Additionally or alternatively, the distribution models may include different compensation-based models for gaining access to media programs. For example, the distribution models may include one or more subscription-based distribution models and one or more transactional-based distribution models. A subscription-based distribution model may be defined by a service provider to provide a user with access to certain media programs based solely on a subscription of the user to the media service 102 (e.g., a monthly fee subscription, a temporary free-trial subscription, or another defined subscription) without charging discrete transactional fees for access to the media programs. A transactional-based distribution model may be defined by a service provider to provide a user with access to certain media programs based on discrete transactions dedicated to accessing specific media programs. For example, access to a media program may be provided in exchange for a transactional fee dedicated to a rental or a purchase of the media program. The conditions of the access may be defined to be different for a rental and a purchase of the media program, in which case each of the rental and the purchase may be a different transaction-based distribution model (e.g., a media rental distribution model and a media purchase distribution model).

[0034] In certain examples, the distribution models may include different models that are combinations of channel-based distribution models and compensation-based distribution models. For example, the different models may include one or more of a subscription-based and digital channel-based distribution model, a transactional-based and digital channel-based distribution model, a subscription-based and physical channel-based distribution model, and a transactional-based and physical channel-based distribution model.

[0035] Distribution facility 104 may be configured to provide users of the media service 102 with access to media programs by way of any of the different distribution models described herein, or by way of any combination or sub-combination thereof. Media programs distributed by distribution facility 104 as part of the media service 102 may be assigned (e.g., by a provider of the media service 102) to one or more of the distribution models provided by distribution facility 104. For example, certain media programs may be made available by way of all of the distribution models and certain media programs may be made available by way of only a subset of the distribution models (e.g., by way of only a subscription-based and digital channel-based distribution model, only a transaction-based and digital channel-based distribution model, only a physical channel-based distribution model, only a transaction-based distribution model, etc.).
In certain examples, assignments of media programs to distribution models may change over time. For example, for a first period of time, a media program may be distributed by way of a first distribution model only. At the end of that period of time, the media program may leave the first distribution model, meaning that the media program is no longer accessible by way of the first distribution model. For a second period of time, however, the same media program may be distributed by way of a second distribution model only. For example, when the media program leaves the first distribution model, the media program may be added to the second distribution model. At the end of the second period of time, the same media program may leave the second distribution model and be assigned to a third distribution model. This example is illustrative only, a media program may be made accessible by way of different distribution models or specific combinations of distribution models for specific periods of time, and may be added to or removed from any distribution model in any suitable way.

Distribution facility 104 may maintain and/or otherwise have access to data representing relationships between media programs and distribution models by way of which the media programs are distributed. Such data may indicate to which distribution models the media programs are assigned and periods of time for the assignments (e.g., periods of time during which media programs are assigned to the distribution models). This data may be maintained in any suitable way, including in distinct source catalogues respectively associated with the distribution models, in an integrated catalogue associated with all of the distribution models (e.g., an integrated catalogue that includes an aggregation of non-redundant data included in the source catalogues), or a combination of such source catalogues and an integrated catalogue.

Returning to FIG. 1, subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide subscription-based access to media programs distributed by distribution facility 104. To this end, subscription facility 106 may maintain subscription data 112, which may represent a subscription of a user to media service 102 (e.g., a subscription user account with media service 102). The subscription data 112 may specify information about the subscription, including a subscription level and media program access permissions associated with the subscription. Accordingly, subscription facility 106 may be configured to grant the user subscription-based access to media programs based on the user's subscription represented in the subscription data 112.

Subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide different types of subscription-based access to media programs. For example, subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide "subscription-type" and "transactional-type" access to media programs based on a subscription to media service 102. Subscription-type access may refer to subscription-based access to media programs by way of a subscription-based distribution model, and transactional-type access may refer to subscription-based access to media programs by way of a transactional-based distribution model.

To illustrate, FIG. 3 shows a configuration 300 in which a subscriber 302 to media service 102 is provided with subscription-based subscription-type access 304 ("subscription-type access 304") to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model 306 and with subscription-based transactional-type access 308 ("transactional-type access 308") to media programs distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model 310.

Through subscription-type access 304, subscription facility 106 may provide subscriber 302 with access to media programs distributed by way of subscription-based media distribution model 306 based solely on a subscription of the subscriber 302 to media service 102 without requiring the subscriber 302 to pay discrete transactional fees specific to instances of accessing the media programs. Thus, subscriber 302 is not required to pay a discrete transaction fee to access a media program by way of subscription-based media distribution model 306.

Through transactional-type access 308, subscription facility 106 may provide subscriber 302 with access to media programs distributed by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310 based on subscription-based payments of discrete transactions fees to access the media programs. To illustrate, access to media programs by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310 requires payment of transactional fees to access the media programs. For example, a user may pay a fee to complete a transaction to access (e.g., rent or buy) a specific media program by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310. The payment may be in any suitable form accepted by a provider of media service 102. For example, the payment may be made by credit card (e.g., with credit card information maintained in association with a subscriber account with media service 102) or another acceptable form of payment (e.g., a payment by way of another accepted third-party payment service).

Subscription facility 106 may provide another acceptable form of payment of transaction fees that is based on a subscription of subscriber 302 to media service 102. For example, subscription facility 106 may issue subscription credits to subscriber 302 as part of the subscription of subscriber 302 to media service 102. The subscription credits may be an acceptable form of payment to the provider of media service 102. Accordingly, subscriber 302 may use the subscription credits as transactional payments to access media programs by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310. FIG. 3 illustrates a subscription credit 312 being provided by subscriber 302 as a transactional payment in exchange for access to a media program 314 distributed by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310.

Subscription facility 106 may be configured to manage subscription credits associated with a subscription of a subscriber to media service 102. For example, based on and/or as part of the subscription, subscription facility 106 may issue a predefined number of subscription credits (e.g., one or more subscription credits) for use by subscriber 302 to pay for transactional access to media programs. Subscription facility 106 may issue a subscription credit in any suitable way, such as by updating an account of the subscriber 302 with the media service 102 to indicate that the subscriber 302 has a subscription credit that is available for use to pay for transactional-based access to a media program. Subscription facility 106 may issue a predefined number of subscription credits to subscriber 302 periodically (e.g., monthly, weekly, etc.) and/or in response to a predefined event (e.g., in response to a one-year anniversary of a subscription).

The number of subscription credits issued may depend on a subscription level of the subscription. For example, subscription facility 106 may issue a relatively higher number of credits for a higher-tier subscription level.
and a relatively lower number of credits for a lower-tier subscription level. A subscriber may be allowed to upgrade or downgrade a subscription from one subscription level to another. When such an upgrade or downgrade occurs, the previously issued subscription credits will not be caused to expire in response to the upgrade or downgrade in subscription level.

Subscription facility 106 may be configured to issue different types of subscription credits. The type of subscription credits issued may depend on a subscription level of the subscription. Subscription credits may differ in type in that they may be eligible for use to access different types of media programs (e.g., different media formats and/or content types of media programs). For example, a first type of subscription credit may be usable to access DVDs but not BLU-RAY discs or video game discs distributed a media vending kiosk distribution model. Another type of subscription credit may be usable to access DVDs and BLU-RAY discs but not video game discs distributed a media vending kiosk distribution model. Another type of subscription credit may be usable to access DVDs, BLU-RAY discs, and video game discs distributed a media vending kiosk distribution model.

Subscription credits may be defined to have a finite lifetime during which the subscription credits are available for use by subscriber 302 as payments of transactional fees to access media programs. Subscription facility 106 may cause unused subscription credits to expire at the end of the lifetime, making the unused subscription credits unavailable for use by subscriber 302. For example, subscription facility 106 may be configured to cause unused subscription credits to expire at the end of a week-long, thirty-day-long, or month-long lifetime.

Available subscription credits may be configured for selective use by subscriber 302 to pay for transactional-based access to media programs distributed by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310. That is, subscriber 302 may elect whether to use a subscription credit or a different payment option (e.g., a non-subscription-based payment option such as a credit card payment) to pay for transactional access to a media program. Accordingly, a transactional-distribution nature of transactional-based media distribution model 310 may be followed while still providing subscription-based access to the media programs distributed by way of transactional-based media distribution model 310.

Transactional-based media distribution model 310 may include any transaction-based distribution model that provides a user with access to specific media programs based on discrete transactions in which transaction fees dedicated to accessing the specific media programs are provided by the user. As an example, transactional-based media distribution model 310 may include a transactional-based distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel to distribute media programs based on transactions to rent, buy, or otherwise access the media programs. As another example, transactional-based media distribution model 310 may include a transactional-based distribution model that utilizes a physical media distribution channel to distribute physical copies of media programs based on transactions to rent, buy, or otherwise access the physical copies of the media programs. For instance, transactional-based media distribution model 310 may be a transactional-based distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel to distribute physical copies of media programs based on transactions to rent, buy, or otherwise access the physical copies of the media programs.

FIG. 4 illustrates a table 400 representing a set of different distribution models by way of which access to media programs may be provided through the media service 102 in certain implementations. As shown, the set of distribution models may include a first distribution model 402-1 associated with subscription-type access to media programs by way of a digital media distribution channel, a second distribution model 402-2 associated with transactional-type access to media programs by way of the digital media distribution channel, and a third distribution model 402-3 associated with transactional-type access to media programs by way of a physical media distribution channel. In certain examples, these distribution models 402 may be referred to as a “subscription” digital distribution model 402-1, an “on-demand” or “rent/buy” digital distribution model 402-2, and a “physical” or “kiosk” distribution model 402-3.

In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide subscription-based subscription-type access to media programs by way of distribution model 402-1. In addition, through subscription credits, subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide subscription-based transactional-type access to media programs by way of either or both distribution model 402-2 and distribution model 402-3.

Subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide one or more tools configured to facilitate subscription-based access to media programs. As an example, subscription facility 106 may provide notifications about subscription credits (e.g., notifications of credits available, expiration dates of credits, credit replenishment dates, etc.) in a media service user interface. As another example, subscription facility 106 may provide one or more tools configured for use by the user to indicate whether a subscription credit will be applied to a transaction fee for transactional-based access to a media program. For example, such a tool may be used by the user to indicate whether a subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model (e.g., to access a physical copy of the media program by way of a media vending kiosk distribution model). Examples of such tools will now be described in reference to FIGS. 5-14.

FIG. 5 illustrates an example of an account management view 500 (“view 500”) of a media service user interface. As shown, view 500 may include information and/or options associated with a subscription account of a user with media service 102, such as personal information about the user, login information, billing information (e.g., credit card information), subscription credits information, promotional credits information, preferred kiosk information, and options to edit such information.

Information about credit cards associated with the subscription may be displayed in a credit card management area 502. As shown, the information may indicate credits cards currently associated with the subscription account and how the credit cards are configured for use with the subscription account. For example, the information indicates that a card labeled “My Amex” is set as the primary credit card to be used to pay a subscription fee for the subscription and that a card labeled “My Disc” is set as the primary credit card to be used to pay transaction fees for transactional rentals and
purchases of media programs. A link 504 may be selected by a user to access another user interface view in which the user may change credit card information and/or preferences.

[0055] Information about subscription credits may be displayed in a subscription credits information area 506. As shown, the information, which may be real-time information, may include a first notification indicating a number of issued subscription credits that are currently available for use by the user and a second notification indicating scheduled expiration dates of the subscription credits. A link 508 may be selected by the user to access another user interface view in which the user may manage subscription credits, such as by changing user preferences defining when and/or how subscription credits are applied. For example, the user may select whether subscription credits will be automatically applied or whether a user selectable option will be automatically set to an option to apply subscription credits to a transaction.

[0056] Information about subscription credits may also be displayed in a header area 510 of view 500. As shown, the information in header area 510 may include a notification indicating a number of issued subscription credits currently available for use by the user. While the information in header area 510 is displayed within view 500 in FIG. 5, the example is illustrative only. Header area 510 and its contents may be displayed within any suitable view of a media service user interface, including a media program browse view and an information view for a media program. In certain examples, information about credits in header area 510 may include a user selectable link to another user interface view in which the user may manage subscription credits as described herein.

[0057] In certain examples, user may select a link in view 500 (e.g., link 508 or the informational link in header area 510) to access another user interface view in which a subscription credits history is displayed. The subscription credits history may include any information about a history of subscription credits for the user, including, for example, information about numbers and/or types of subscription credits issued to the user, issue dates of subscription credits, redemption dates of subscription credits, expiration dates of subscription credits, and invoices for transactions in which subscription credits were applied as payments. From this view, a user may link to an invoice view of an invoice in which a subscription credit has been redeemed.

[0058] View 500 may include a menu option 512 selectable by the user to access a transaction history. In the transaction history, the user may be able to view or access information about usage of subscription credits within historical transactions.

[0059] FIG. 6 illustrates an example of an account summary view 600 (“view 600”) of a media service user interface. As shown, view 600 may include summary information and/or options associated with a subscription account of a user with media service 102, such as personal information about the user, login information, billing information (e.g., credit card information), subscription credits information, account activity information, and account type information.

[0060] Information about subscription credits may include a first notification 602 indicating a number of available subscription credits currently remaining for use by the user and a second notification 604 indicating a scheduled date on which subscription credits will be replenished based on the subscription of the user. In FIG. 6, for example, the information indicates that the user has three subscription credits remaining and that subscription credits will be replenished on a particular date (e.g., subscription facility 106 is scheduled to issue one or more new credits to the user on the particular date based on the subscription of the user).

[0061] FIG. 7 illustrates an example of a checkout view 700 (“view 700”) of a media service user interface. In certain examples, view 700 may be displayed in response to a user request to checkout to complete a transaction to access (e.g., reserve, rent, purchase, or otherwise access) one or more media programs. Such a user request to checkout to complete a transaction may initiate a checkout procedure during which a user is able to provide input to complete the transaction. In the illustrated example, view 700 is a media program reservation checkout view displayed in conjunction with a checkout for a transaction to reserve DVDs of movies titled “Iron Man 2” and “Captain America” for pick-up by a user at a particular media vending kiosk. View 700 includes cover art images 702-1 and 702-2 representing the two movies, pricing information 704-1 and 704-2 for the reservation of the movies, and pick-up information 706 indicating an address of the kiosk at which the reserved movies will be available for pick-up. View 700 may further include options 708-1 and 708-2 configured to be selected by the user to add an additional movie or a video game to the checkout cart. View 700 may further include promotional content 710 indicating a promotional offer to the user (e.g., an offer to reserve an additional DVD at a reduced cost).

[0062] View 700 may include payment options for use by the user to select how to pay for the transaction. As shown, view 700 may include a credit card selection tool 712 for use by the user to select which of the credit cards associated with the user's account with media service 102 will be charged for the transaction. As further shown, view 700 may include a credit selection tool 714 for use by the user to indicate whether to apply subscription credits to the transaction (e.g., whether to apply subscription credits to a reservation transaction). In the illustrated example, credit selection tool 714 includes a checkbox that may be checked by the user to indicate that subscription credits will be applied to the transaction or unchecked by the user to indicate that subscription credits will not be applied to the transaction. When view 700 is launched, the checkbox may be initially checked or unchecked based on a default or user preference setting. The user may leave the checkbox set to its initial setting or provide input to change the setting of the checkbox.

[0063] In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to selectively provide credit selection tool 714 for display in view 700 based on one or more predefined factors, which may include subscription credit availability and/or media program eligibility. For example, subscription facility 106 may provide credit selection tool 714 for display in view 700 if at least one subscription credit is available for use by the user and/or if at least one of the media programs in the checkout cart are eligible for payment by an available subscription credit. To this end, in response to a user request to complete a transaction, subscription facility 106 may determine whether at least one subscription credit is available and/or whether at least one media program in the checkout cart is eligible for payment by a subscription credit. If subscription facility 106 determines that at least one subscription credit is available and/or that at least one media program in the checkout cart is eligible for payment by a subscription credit, subscription facility 106 may provide credit selection tool 714 for display in view 700. Conversely, if subscription facility 106 determines that the user has no
available subscription credits and/or none of the media programs in the checkout cart is eligible for payment by a subscription credit, subscription facility 106 may omit credit selection tool 714 from view 700.

[0064] As shown in FIG. 7, view 700 may include a notification 716 displayed together with credit selection tool 714 and that indicates a number of subscription credits that are available for use by the user. As further shown, view 700 may include information 718 about credit usage. In the illustrated example, information 718 indicates certain restrictions to credit usage, such as certain types of media programs (e.g., video games) and/or certain types of transactions (e.g., digital rentals, purchases, etc.) being ineligible for payment by subscription credits. Information 718 also indicates that a subscription upgrade may be needed and/or available in order to use subscription credits for certain types of media programs (e.g., for BLU-RAY disc reservations and rentals).

[0065] With the credit card labeled “Personal Visa” selected by credit card selection tool 712 and the checkbox of credit selection tool 714 checked to indicate that subscription credits will be applied to the transaction, the user may select an option 720 labeled “Reserve Now” to complete the transaction in accordance with the selected credit card and subscription credits settings. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may respond to a selection of option 720 by processing the transaction, which may include using subscription credits first as payment for the transaction and using the selected credit card for payment of any remaining balance. In the example illustrated in FIG. 7, two subscription credits will be applied to cover the full balance of the transaction for reservation and/or rental of the DVDs for an initial reservation and/or rental period (e.g., one day). Subscription facility 106 may also use subscription credits first as payment for an extended reservation or rental period, followed by the selected credit card if available subscription credits are exhausted.

[0066] In response to a user selection of option 720, a checkout completion view may be displayed. FIG. 8 illustrates an example of a checkout completion view 800 (“view 800”) of a media service user interface. As shown, view 800 may include cover art images 802-1 and 802-2 representing the two reserved movies, pricing information 804-1 and 804-2 for the reservation of the movies, and pick-up information 806 (e.g., pick-up information 806-1 and 806-2) indicating an address of the kiosk at which the reserved movies are available for pick-up, an end-time of the reservation, and an end-time of a first rental period. The information 806 may also include a notification reminding the user to bring the selected credit card for use at the media vending kiosk to pick up the reserved movies.

[0067] Checkout views 700 and 800 are illustrative of certain examples of checkout views that may be displayed in conjunction with a user checking out to complete a transaction. Other checkout views may be provided in other examples, such as examples in which different types of user devices are used to access and display the views. FIGS. 9-10 illustrates other examples of checkout views.

[0068] FIG. 9 illustrates another example of a checkout view 900 (“view 900”) of a media service user interface. In certain examples, view 900 may be displayed in response to a user request to checkout to complete a transaction to access (e.g., reserve, rent, purchase, or otherwise access) one or more media programs. In the illustrated example, view 900 is a media program reservation checkout view displayed in conjunction with a checkout for a transaction to reserve DVDs of movies titled “Captain America” and “Iron Man 2” for pick-up by a user at a media vending kiosk. View 900 includes cover art images 902-1 and 902-2 representing the two movies, pricing information 904-1 and 904-2 for the reservation of the movies, and pick-up information 906 indicating an address of the kiosk at which the reserved movies will be available for pick-up. View 900 may further include an option 908 configured to be selected by the user to view the inventory of the media vending kiosk to the checkout cart.

[0069] View 900 may include payment options for use by the user to select how to pay for the transaction and a notification 910 indicating that the payment options will be applied to an initial rental period and any additional rental periods. As shown, view 900 may include a credit card selection tool 912 for use by the user to select which of the credit cards associated with the user’s account with media service 102 will be charged for the transaction. As further shown, view 900 may include a credit selection tool 914 for use by the user to indicate whether to apply subscription credits to the transaction (e.g., whether to apply subscription credits to a reservation transaction). In the illustrated example, credit selection tool 914 includes a check indicating that subscription credits will be applied to the transaction. The user may provide input to change this setting to indicate that subscription credits will not be applied to the transaction. When view 900 is launched, the option to apply subscription credits may be initially checked or unchecked based on a default or user preference setting. The user may leave the option set to its initial setting or provide input to change the setting of the option.

[0070] In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to selectively provide credit selection tool 914 for display in view 900 based on one or more predefined factors, which may include subscription credit availability and/or media program eligibility, such as described herein.

[0071] As shown in FIG. 9, view 900 may include a notification 916 displayed together with credit selection tool 914 and that indicates a number of subscription credits that are available for use by the user. As further shown, view 900 may include information 918 about credit usage. In the illustrated example, information 918 indicates certain restrictions to credit usage, such as certain types of media programs (e.g., video games) and/or certain types of transactions (e.g., digital rentals, purchases, etc.) being ineligible for payment by subscription credits. Information 918 also indicates that a subscription upgrade may be needed and/or available in order to use subscription credits for certain types of media programs (e.g., for BLU-RAY disc reservations and rentals).

[0072] With the credit card ending in “4194” selected by credit card selection tool 912 and the option of credit selection tool 914 checked to indicate that subscription credits will be applied to the transaction, the user may select an option 920 labeled “Reserve Now” to complete the transaction in accordance with the selected credit card and subscription credits settings. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may respond to a selection of option 920 by processing the transaction, which may include using subscription credits first as payment for the transaction and using the selected credit card for payment of any remaining balance. In the example illustrated in FIG. 9, two subscription credits will be applied to cover the full balance of the transaction for reservation and/or rental of the DVDs for an initial reservation and/or rental period (e.g., one day). Subscription facility 106 may also use
subscription credits first as payment for an extended reservation or rental period, followed by the selected credit card if available subscription credits are exhausted.

[0073] In response to a user selection of option 920, a checkout completion view may be displayed. FIG. 10 illustrates another example of a checkout completion view 1000 (“view 1000”) of a media service user interface. As shown, view 1000 may include pick-up information 1002 (e.g., pick-up information 1002-1 and 1002-2) indicating an address of the kiosk at which the reserved movies are available for pick-up, an end-time of the reservation, and an end-time of a first rental period. View 1000 may also include an option 1004 for selection by the user to access directions to the geographic location of the kiosk. As shown, view 1000 may include a notification 1006 indicating the number of available credits that remain after the transaction has been processed. As further shown, view 1000 may include a recommendations area 1008 that includes cover art images representing one or more media programs that are similar to the media programs reserved by the transaction and/or that are included in the inventory of the same kiosk.

[0074] In certain examples, a user may provide input to navigate from a checkout view to a media program browse view (“browse view”) of a media service user interface. For example, in response to a user selection of any of options 708-1, 708-2, or 708, a browse view may be provided for display. In certain examples, the browse view may include browse content representing media programs specific to a particular media vending kiosk. The user may use the content of the browse view to discover media programs and/or add one or more additional media programs to a checkout cart.

[0075] FIG. 11 illustrates an example of a media program browse view 1100 (“browse view 1100” or “view 1100”) of a media service user interface. In FIG. 11, view 1100 includes a browse area 1102 in which displayed cover art images represent media programs included in the current inventory of a particular media vending kiosk. View 1100 includes a visual indication 1104 of the kiosk being browsed.

[0076] View 1100 may include information about the contents of the checkout cart. For example, view 1100 may include a checkout cart area 1106 displayed together with the browse area 1102. Checkout cart area 1106 may include content associated with the checkout cart, such as a cover art image 1108 representing a media program in the checkout cart, a visual indication 1110 of the kiosk associated with the checkout cart, a summary 1110 of a transaction that will be processed at checkout (including an indication of how a subscription credit will be applied to the transaction), and a checkout option 1112 selectable by the user to proceed to checkout.

[0077] One or more of the exemplary views illustrated in FIGS. 5-11 may be displayed by any suitable computing device of a user of the media service 102, including any of the exemplary computing devices mentioned herein as examples of devices that may be included in user computing system 202. Additionally or alternatively, a media vending kiosk, such as kiosk 216-1 for example, may be configured to display, on a display screen integrated within the kiosk, a kiosk user interface for use by the user to discover and access physical copies of media programs vended by the kiosk. The kiosk user interface may be configured to facilitate subscription-based access to media programs vended by the kiosk. As an example, subscription facility 106 may provide notifications about subscription credits (e.g., notifications of credits available, expiration dates of credits, credit replenishment dates, etc.) in a kiosk user interface. As another example, subscription facility 106 may provide, in a kiosk user interface, one or more tools configured for use by the user to indicate whether a subscription credit will be applied to a transaction fee for transactional-based access to a media program. For example, such a tool may be used by the user to indicate whether a subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access (e.g., rent) a physical copy of the media program from the kiosk.

[0078] FIG. 12 illustrates an example of a checkout view 1200 (“view 1200”) of a kiosk user interface. In certain examples, view 1200 may be displayed in response to a user request to checkout to complete a transaction to access (e.g., rent or otherwise access) one or more media programs from a media vending kiosk. Such a user request to checkout to complete a transaction may initiate a checkout procedure during which a user is able to provide input to complete the transaction at a media vending kiosk. In the illustrated example, view 1200 is a media program rental checkout view displayed in conjunction with a checkout for a transaction to rent a DVD of a movie titled “bella” from a particular media vending kiosk. View 1200 includes a cover art image 1202 representing the movie and pricing information 1204 for the rental of the movie. View 1200 may further include options 1208-1 and 1208-2 configured to be selected by the user to add an additional movie or a video game to the checkout cart.

[0079] View 1200 may include payment tools for use by the user to select how to pay for the transaction. As shown, view 1200 may include a promotional code payment tool 1208 for selection by the user to use a promotional code as payment for the transaction, a payment tool 1210 for selection by the user to use a credit card as payment for the transaction, and a credit selection tool 1212 for selection by the user to use one or more subscription credits as payment for the transaction.

[0080] In response to a user selection of credit selection tool 1212, a checkout view 1300 (“subscription credit checkout view 1300” or “view 1300”) illustrated in FIG. 13 may be displayed in the kiosk user interface. As shown, view 1300 may include information 1302 instructing the user how to pay with subscription credits. In the illustrated example, the information 1302 instructs the user to provide (e.g., swipe) a credit card associated with the subscription account of the user with media service 102. From the credit card information, subscription facility 106 may identify the user account associated with the user and access and apply available subscription credits associated with the user account to the transaction. An alternative way of identifying a user and/or user account, such as by the user providing login information to the kiosk user interface, may be used in other examples.

[0081] After identifying the user and/or the appropriate user account, subscription facility 106 may continue to process the transaction by applying an appropriate number of available subscription credits of the user as payment for the transaction. Alternatively, another checkout view may be provided to give the user an opportunity to review and confirm the details of the transaction. FIG. 14 illustrates an example of another checkout view 1400 (“subscription credit checkout view 1400” or “view 1400”) of a kiosk user interface.

[0082] As shown, view 1400 may include a notification 1402 indicating a number of available subscription credits and/or a number of the available subscription credits that will be applied to the transaction. View 1400 may also include information 1404 indicating how subscription credits will be
applied first for the transaction followed by a credit card should available credits be exhausted. View 1400 may further include information 1406 about credit usage. In the illustrated example, information 1406 indicates certain restrictions to credit usage, such as certain types of media programs (e.g., video games, BLU-RAY discs, etc.) and/or certain types of transactions (e.g., purchases, etc.) being ineligible for payment by subscription credits. View 1400 may also include a summary 1408 of the transaction indicating application of the subscription credits as payment for the transaction. View 1400 may also include a notification 1410 indicating the number of available subscription credits that remain after the transaction is processed. View 1400 may further include a confirmation option 1412 for selection by the user to confirm the details of the transaction and complete the transaction.

[0083] Subscription facility 106 may be configured to provide a user with access to media programs through media service 102 based on a user account with the media service 102. This may include any suitable verification and/or authentication operations. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to verify an active subscription with media service 102 before providing the user with access to media programs. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to authenticate a user device requesting access to media programs.

[0084] To this end, in addition or alternative to managing subscription credits of a subscription account with media service 102, subscription facility 106 may be configured to manage user devices registered with the subscription account. For example, subscription facility 106 may maintain data representative of user devices registered with the subscription account, register and unregister user devices with the subscription account, and/or provide one or more tools for use by the user to manage the user devices registered with the subscription account. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may allow up to a predefined maximum number of user devices to be concurrently registered with the subscription account. Registration of a user device with the subscription account may be requisite for the user device to be authenticated for playback of media programs accessed through media service 102.

[0085] Returning to FIG. 5, account management view 500 may include a manage devices option 514 configured to be selected by the user to launch a view that includes one or more tools for use by the user to manage the user devices registered with the subscription account. Such tools may allow the user to add or remove devices from the subscription account and/or modify settings of user devices registered with the subscription account.

[0086] In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may be configured to automatically add a new user device to the subscription account in response to an occurrence of a predefined event. For example, a user may utilize a user device to access a media service user interface associated with media service 102. Through the media service user interface, the user may request access, via the user device, to a media program through media service 102. In response, subscription facility 106 may detect that the user device is not registered with the subscription account of the user and may automatically register the user device with the subscription account transparently to the user and allow the requested accessing of the media program to continue. The automatic registration may be performed by subscription facility 106 in any suitable way and may include subscription facility 106 communicating with the user device to obtain information about the user device.

[0087] In certain examples, when attempting to automatically register the user device with the subscription account, subscription facility 106 may detect that a maximum number of user devices are already registered with the subscription account. This may create a device conflict. In response to the detected device conflict, the subscription facility 106 may provide one or more device conflict resolution tools for use by the user to resolve the conflict. For example, subscription facility 106 they provide one or more device conflict resolution views of the media service user interface that include information and/or tools for use by the user to provide input to resolve the conflict.

[0088] FIG. 15 illustrates an example of a device conflict resolution view 1500 ("view 1500") of a media service user interface. As shown, view 1500 may include a notification 1502 that a maximum number of devices are already registered with the user’s subscription account. Notification 1502 may indicate to the user that one of the registered devices should be removed to create room for the new user device to be registered with the subscription account.

[0089] View 1500 may include a tool 1504 for use by the user to label (e.g., rename) the new user device to be registered with the subscription account. Additionally or alternatively, view 1500 may include a tool 1506 for use by the user to select one of the already-registered devices for removal from the subscription account. Subscription facility 106 may initially populate tool 1506 with information about one of the already-registered devices, such as a first of the devices included in a list of the devices.

[0090] In certain examples, in response to a user selection of tool 1506, subscription facility 106 may display another device conflict resolution view, such as device conflict resolution view 1600 ("view 1600") shown in FIG. 16. As shown, view 1600 may include a list 1602 of user devices currently registered with the subscription account. In the illustrated example, the list 1602 is sorted based on the date of registration of each of the devices with the subscription account (e.g., from least recently to most recently registered with the subscription). In view 1600, the first entry of the list 1602 is currently selected, as indicated by a checkmark 1604 next to the entry. The user may provide input to change the selection to another device included in the list. When the user is finished making a selection, the user may provide input to select a back option 1606 to return to view 1500 shown in FIG. 15. Within view 1500, the user may select a "save changes" option 1508. In response, subscription facility 106 may remove the selected user device from the subscription account and add the new user device to the subscription account.

[0091] In this or a similar manner, subscription facility 106 may transparently add a user device to a subscription account on the fly without requiring the user to navigate away from the current context of the media service user interface in order to manually add the new user device to the subscription account. Additionally or alternatively, subscription facility 106 may provide one or more tools for device conflict resolution on the fly without requiring the user to navigate away from the context of the media service user interface and/or the new user device in order to resolve a device conflict.

[0092] System 100 may be configured to generate and provide any of the user interfaces and/or exemplary views of user
interfaces described herein for display. In certain examples, subscription facility 106 may provide a view of a user interface for display and/or may generate specific user interface content used to populate a view of the user interface. Subscription facility 106 may populate the view of the user interface with the content or may provide the content for use in populating the view of the user interface. In this or a similar manner, subscription facility 106 may perform any suitable operations related to subscription facility 106 and/or system 100 providing a user interface view for display.

[0093] After subscription facility 106 has verified a subscription account and/or authenticate a requesting user device, subscription facility 106 may provide a user with access to media programs. This may include performing any operations that give the user the access, such as granting permission to access the media programs, facilitating a transaction for access to one or more media programs, initiating transmission of data representative of the media programs, etc.

[0094] FIGS. 17-18 illustrate exemplary methods 1700-1800 of subscription-based access to media programs according to principles described herein. While FIGS. 17-18 illustrate exemplary steps according to certain embodiments, other embodiments may omit, add to, reorder, combine, and/or modify any of the steps shown in FIGS. 17-18. In certain embodiments, one or more of the steps shown in FIGS. 17-18 may be performed by system 100 and/or one or more components or implementations of system 100.

[0095] Turning to the method 1700 illustrated in FIG. 17, in step 1702, a system (e.g., system 100) provides, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model (e.g., a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel), such as described herein.

[0096] In step 1704, the system issues, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model. For example, the system may issue a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model. For example, the system may provide a notification about the subscription credit. For example, the system may provide any of the notifications about the subscription credit described herein.

[0097] In step 1706, the system provides a notification about the subscription credit. For example, the system may provide any of the notifications about the subscription credit described herein.

[0098] In step 1708, the system provides at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model. For example, the system may provide at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access a physical copy of the media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a physical media distribution channel (e.g., a media vending kiosk distribution channel), such as described herein.

[0099] In step 1710, the system applies the subscription credit as payment in the transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model, such as described herein.

[0100] Turning to the method 1800 illustrated in FIG. 18, in step 1802, a system (e.g., system 100) provides, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model (e.g., a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel), such as described herein.

[0101] In step 1804, the system issues, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model. For example, the system may issue a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a physical media distribution channel (e.g., a media vending kiosk distribution channel), such as described herein.

[0102] In step 1806, the system detects a user request to complete a transaction to access the media program. For example, the system may detect a user request to checkout to complete the transaction, such as described herein.

[0103] In step 1808, the system determines whether the subscription credit is available. In certain examples, in response to the detecting of the user request in step 1806, the system may determine whether the user has any subscription credits available for use.

[0104] In step 1810, the system determines that the media program is eligible for payment by the subscription credit. In certain examples, in response to the detecting of the user request in step 1806, the system may determine whether the media program that is the subject of the transaction is eligible for payment by the subscription credit. A provider of media service 102 may have defined certain media program as being eligible and others as being ineligible for access by way of subscription credits as payment of transactions.

[0105] In certain examples, either or both of steps 1808 and 1810 may be performed by system and used by system to determine whether to provide a credit selection tool in a checkout user interface view. For example, if the system determines that the user does not have any available subscription credits, a credit selection tool may be omitted or modified in the checkout view such that the user is not provided an option to apply a subscription credit to the transaction. As another example, if the system determines that the media program that is the subject of the transaction is not eligible for subscription credit usage, a credit selection tool may be omitted or modified in the checkout view such that the user is not provided an option to apply a subscription credit to the transaction.

[0106] Alternatively, if the system determines that the use has an available subscription credit and that the media program is eligible for subscription credit usage, the system may provide the credit selection tool in the checkout view such that the user is provided with an option whether to use the subscription credit for the transaction. In step 1812, the system provides, in a checkout view of a user interface, a credit selection tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in
the transaction to access the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model. For example, the system may provide at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in the transaction to access a physical copy of the media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a physical media distribution channel (e.g., a media vending kiosk distribution channel), such as described herein.

[0107] In certain embodiments, one or more of the systems, components, and/or processes described herein may be implemented and/or performed by one or more appropriately configured computing devices. To this end, one or more of the systems and/or components described above may include or be implemented by any computer hardware and/or computer-implemented instructions (e.g., software) embodied on at least one non-transitory computer-readable medium configured to perform one or more of the processes described herein. In particular, system components may be implemented on one physical computing device or may be implemented on more than one physical computing device. Accordingly, system components may include any number of computing devices, and may employ any of a number of computer operating systems.

[0108] In certain embodiments, one or more of the processes described herein may be implemented at least in part as instructions executable by one or more computing devices. In general, a physical computer processor (e.g., a microprocessor) receives instructions, from a tangible computer-readable medium, (e.g., a memory, etc.), and executes those instructions, thereby performing one or more processes, including one or more of the processes described herein. Such instructions may be stored and/or transmitted using any of a variety of non-transitory computer-readable media.

[0109] A non-transitory computer-readable medium (also referred to as a processor-readable medium) includes any non-transitory medium that participates in providing data (e.g., instructions) that may be read by a computer (e.g., by a processor of a computer). Such a non-transitory medium may take many forms, including, but not limited to, non-volatile media and/or volatile media. Non-volatile media may include, for example, optical or magnetic disks and other persistent memory. Volatile media may include, for example, dynamic random access memory ("DRAM"), which typically constitutes a main memory. Common forms of non-transitory computer-readable media include, for example, a floppy disk, flexible disk, hard disk, magnetic tape, any other magnetic medium, a CD-ROM, DVD, any other optical medium, a RAM, a PROM, an EPROM, a FLASH-EPROM, any other memory chip or cartridge, or any other non-transitory medium from which a computer can read.

[0110] FIG. 19 illustrates an exemplary computing device 1900 configured to perform one or more of the processes described herein. As shown in FIG. 19, computing device 1900 may include a communication interface 1902, a processor 1904, a storage device 1906, and an input/output ("I/O") module 1908 communicatively connected via a communication infrastructure 1910. While an exemplary computing device 1900 is shown in FIG. 19, the components illustrated in FIG. 19 are not intended to be limiting. Additional or alternative components may be used in other embodiments. Components of computing device 1900 shown in FIG. 19 will now be described in additional detail.

[0111] Communication interface 1902 may be configured to communicate with one or more computing devices. Examples of communication interface 1902 include, without limitation, a wired network interface (such as a network interface card), a wireless network interface (such as a wireless network interface card), a modem, and any other suitable interface. Communication interface 1902 may additionally or alternatively provide such a connection through, for example, a local area network (such as an Ethernet network), a personal area network, a telephone or cable network, a satellite data connection, a dedicated URL, an Internet access network, or any other suitable connection. Communication interface 1902 may be configured to interface with any suitable communication media, protocols, and formats.

[0112] Processor 1904 generally represents any type or form of processing unit capable of processing data or interpreting, executing, and/or directing execution of one or more of the instructions, processes, and/or operations described herein. Processor 1904 may direct execution of operations in accordance with one or more applications 1912 or other computer-executable instructions such as may be stored in storage device 1906 or another non-transitory computer-readable medium.

[0113] Storage device 1906 may include one or more data storage media, devices, or configurations and may employ any type, form, and combination of data storage media and/or device. For example, storage device 1906 may include, but is not limited to, a hard drive, network drive, flash drive, magnetic disc, optical disc, random access memory ("RAM"), dynamic RAM ("DRAM"), other non-volatile and/or volatile data storage units, or a combination of sub-combination thereof. Electronic data, including data described herein, may be temporarily or permanently stored in storage device 1906. For example, data representative of one or more executable applications 1912 configured to direct processor 1904 to perform any of the operations described herein may be stored within storage device 1906. In some examples, data may be arranged in one or more databases residing within storage device 1906.

[0114] I/O module 1908 may be configured to receive user input and provide user output and may include any hardware, firmware, software, or combination thereof supportive of input and output capabilities. For example, I/O module 1908 may include hardware and/or software for capturing user input, including, but not limited to, a keyboard or keypad, a touch screen component (e.g., touch screen display), a receiver (e.g., an RF or infrared receiver), and/or one or more input buttons.

[0115] I/O module 1908 may include one or more devices for presenting output to a user, including, but not limited to, a graphics engine, a display (e.g., a display screen), one or more output drivers (e.g., display drivers), one or more audio speakers, and one or more audio drivers. In certain embodiments, I/O module 1908 is configured to provide graphical data to a display for presentation to a user. The graphical data may be representative of one or more graphical user interfaces and/or any other graphical content as may serve a particular implementation.

[0116] In some examples, any of the systems and/or facilities described herein may be implemented by or within one or more components of computing device 1900. For example, one or more applications 1912 residing within storage device 1906 may be configured to direct processor 1904 to perform one or more processes or functions associated with one or
more of the systems and/or facilities described herein. Likewise, any of the storage facilities described herein may be implemented by or within storage device 1906.

[0117] To the extent the aforementioned embodiments collect, store, and/or employ personal information provided by individuals, it should be understood that such information shall be used in accordance with all applicable laws concerning protection of personal information. Additionally, the collection, storage, and use of such information may be subject to consent of the individual to such activity; for example, through well known "opt-in" or "opt-out" processes as may be appropriate for the situation and type of information. Storage and use of personal information may be in an appropriately secure manner reflective of the type of information, for example, through various encryption and anonymization techniques for particularly sensitive information.

[0118] In the preceding description, various exemplary embodiments have been described with reference to the accompanying drawings. It will, however, be evident that various modifications and changes may be made thereto, and additional embodiments may be implemented, without departing from the scope of the invention as set forth in the claims that follow. For example, certain features of one embodiment described herein may be combined with or substituted for features of another embodiment described herein. The description and drawings are accordingly to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
   providing, by a media service provider system based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel;
   issuing, by the media service provider system based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a physical copy of a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel; and
   providing, by the media service provider system, at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the physical copy of the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one tool comprises a credit selection tool included in a media program reservation checkout view of a media service user interface and configured for selection by the user to indicate whether to apply the subscription credit to a reservation of the media program.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the reservation of the media program comprises a reservation of the physical copy of the media program for pickup at a media vending kiosk.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein a default setting of the credit selection tool is to apply the subscription credit to the reservation of the media program.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one tool comprises a credit selection tool included in a media program rental checkout view of a kiosk user interface and configured for selection by the user to indicate whether to apply the subscription credit to a rental of the media program at a media vending kiosk.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
   detecting, by the media service provider system, a user request to complete the transaction to access the physical copy of the media program; and
   determining, by the media service provider system, that the subscription credit is available;
   wherein the providing of the at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in the transaction is performed in response to the user request to complete the transaction and the determining that the subscription credit is available.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
   detecting, by the media service provider system, a user request to complete the transaction to access the physical copy of the media program; and
   determining, by the media service provider system, that the media program is eligible for payment by the subscription credit;
   wherein the providing of the at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in the transaction is performed in response to the user request and the determining that the media program is eligible for payment by the subscription credit.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the subscription credit is configured to expire at an end of a predefined lifetime of the subscription credit.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing, by the media service provider system in a media service user interface, a first notification indicating a number of subscription credits currently available for use by the user.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising providing, by the media service provider system in a media service user interface, a second notification indicating at least one of an expiration date for the currently available subscription credits and a replenishment date on which the media service provider system is scheduled to issue one or more new subscription credits.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the first notification is displayed in at least one of:
   a subscription account management view of the media service user interface;
   a subscription account summary view of the media service user interface;
   a header of a view of the media service user interface; and
   a checkout view of the media service user interface.

12. The method of claim 1, embodied as computer-executable instructions on at least one non-transitory computer-readable medium.

13. A method comprising:
   providing, by a media service provider system based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel;
   issuing, by the media service provider system based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a physical copy of a media
program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel; detecting, by the media service provider system, a user request to complete a transaction to access the physical copy of the media program; determining, by the media service provider system, that the subscription credit is available; determining, by the media service provider system, that the media program is eligible for payment by the subscription credit; and providing, by the media service provider system in a checkout view of a user interface, a credit selection tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in the transaction to access the physical copy of the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein:
the transaction comprises a reservation of the physical copy of the media program for pickup at a media vending kiosk; and
the checkout view comprises a media program reservation checkout view.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein:
the transaction comprises a rental of the physical copy of the media program from a media vending kiosk; and
the checkout view comprises a media program rental checkout view at the media vending kiosk.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein a default setting of the credit selection tool is to apply the subscription credit as payment in the transaction to access the physical copy of the media program.

17. The method of claim 13, embodied as computer-executable instructions on at least one non-transitory computer-readable medium.

18. A system comprising:
at least one physical computing device that:
provides, based on a subscription of a user to a media service, the user of the media service with subscription-based access to media programs distributed by way of a subscription-based media distribution model that utilizes a digital media distribution channel;
issues, based on the subscription of the user to the media service, a subscription credit for selective use by the user to pay for transactional-based access to a physical copy of a media program distributed by way of a transactional-based media distribution model that utilizes a media vending kiosk distribution channel; and
provides at least one tool configured for use by the user to indicate whether the subscription credit will be applied as payment in a transaction to access the physical copy of the media program by way of the transactional-based media distribution model.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the at least one tool comprises a credit selection tool included in a media program reservation checkout view of a media service user interface and configured for selection by the user to indicate whether to apply the subscription credit to a reservation of the media program.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the reservation of the media program comprises a reservation of the physical copy of the media program for pickup at a media vending kiosk.

21. The system of claim 19, wherein a default setting of the credit selection tool is to apply the subscription credit to the reservation of the media program.

22. The system of claim 18, wherein the at least one tool comprises a credit selection tool included in a media program rental checkout view of a kiosk user interface and configured for selection by the user to indicate whether to apply the subscription credit to a rental of the media program at a media vending kiosk.