handed user may choose to use one portion of the disc while a right handed user may choose to use another portion of the disc.

[0031] The position of the dial relative to the mouse housing may be widely varied. For example, the scroll dial may be placed at any external surface (e.g., top, side, front, or back) of the mouse housing **42** that is accessible to a user during manipulation of the mouse **40**. In one embodiment, the plane of rotation created by the rotating dial is substantially parallel to at least a portion of the external surface of the mouse housing on (or in) which the rotary dial is positioned. For example, as shown, the rotary dial may be positioned at a top front surface of the mouse housing, and thus the plane of rotation may be substantially parallel to the top front surface of the mouse housing.

[0032] Furthermore, the rotary dial may be positioned inside or outside the external surface of the mouse housing. For example, the rotary dial may be recessed below, level with, or extend above the surface of the mouse housing. In the illustrated embodiment, the engageable face **48** of the rotary dial **44** is substantially flush with the external surface of the mouse housing. As such, the rotary dial does not protrude out of the mouse thus reducing the amount of accidental scrolling while making the mouse more aesthetically pleasing. The rotary dial **44** may also include tactile features **49**, which provide tangible surfaces that help the user manipulate the rotary dial and that inform the user of its rotatable position during rotation thereof. By way of example, the tactile features may be bumps or voids located in the engageable face **48**.

[0033] **FIGS. 3 and 4** are side and top views, respectively, of a mouse **50**, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention. By way of example, the mouse **50** may generally correspond to the mouse **40** shown in **FIG. 2**. The mouse **50** generally includes a movable base **52**, a button body **54** and a rotatable disc **56**. The movable base **52** is configured to moveably support the mouse **50** on a flat surface (i.e., desktop or mouse pad) so that a user can move an input pointer in a graphical user interface (GUI). In one embodiment, the movable base **52** operatively supports a position detecting mechanism therein so as to track the position of the mouse as it is moved along the flat surface. By way of example the position detecting mechanism may be a trackball mechanism or an optical sensor. The position detecting mechanism is generally configured to provide information to a computer so that the movement of the pointer on the screen corresponds to the movement of the mouse on the flat surface, i.e., when the mouse moves forward, the cursor moves vertically up on the screen.

[0034] In one embodiment, the button body **54** is configured to provide a clicking action for the mouse so that a user can perform an action on a display screen, as for example, making a selection in a GUI. The button body **54** may be pivotable relative to the base **52**. For example, as shown in **FIG. 5**, the button body **54** may pivot around a pivot axis **55**. As such, the body **54** may be pushed down towards the base **52** via a force F in order to generate the clicking action. The force F may be any downward force on the mouse **50**, whether from a finger, palm or hand that results in a clicking action.

[0035] The clicking action may be used to implement a single click, a double click and/or a dragging and dropping function. As is generally well known, a single click often selects an item on the screen, a double click often opens a document or starts a program, and dragging and dropping generally makes it easy to move an item on the screen. In order to perform a single click using the mouse **50**, the user presses and releases the body **54**. In order to perform a double click using the mouse **50**, the user quickly presses and releases the body **54** twice. In order to perform a drag and drop function, the user first positions the pointer or cursor over an item on the screen (by moving the mouse along the flat surface) and presses and holds down the body **54** so as to select the item. Thereafter, the user, while still holding down the body **54**, moves the pointer to a desired position on the screen (by moving the mouse along the flat surface) and subsequently releases the body **54**.

[0036] In most cases, the movable base **52** and button body **54** provide a mouse housing for containing the electronics that generate control signals associated with moving the input pointer, making selections and scrolling. By way of example, the electronics may be printed circuit boards (PCB), processors, encoders, switches, wires, and the like. The base **52** and body **54** may also define the shape or form of the mouse **50**. That is, the contour of the base **52** and body **54** may embody the outward physical appearance of the mouse **50**. The contour may be rectilinear, curvilinear or both. In one embodiment, a bottom side of the base **52** has an external contour (e.g., rectilinear) that substantially conforms to the contour of a flat surface such as a desktop. In addition, a back portion **58** of the body **54** has an external contour (e.g., curved) that substantially conforms to the contour of the palm-side surface of a hand, and a front portion **60** of the body **54** has an external contour (e.g., curved) that substantially conforms to the contour of the fingers of the hand when the palm side surface of the hand is placed on the back portion **58** of the body **54**.

[0037] The rotatable disc **56** is configured to provide a control function for the mouse **50** so that a user can perform one or more actions on a display screen. For example, the rotatable disc **56** may provide a control function corresponding to a scrolling feature that allows a user, for example, to move the GUI vertically (up and down), or horizontally (left and right) in order to bring more data into view on the display screen. The rotatable disc **56** is arranged to rotate relative to the body **54**. As such, the rotatable disc **56** may be rotated around an axis **57** in order to implement the control function. In most cases, the axis **57** is normal to a plane defined by the external surface of the body **54**. As such, the plane of rotation is generally orthogonal to the direction of clicking.

[0038] The orientation of the rotatable disc **56** relative to the base **54** may be widely varied. For example, the rotatable disc **56** may be recessed within, protrude above, or be substantially level with the body **54**. In the illustrated embodiment, a top surface **64** of the rotatable disc **56** is substantially flush with an external surface **66** of the body **54**. As such, the top surface **64**, rather than the edge, of the rotatable disc **56** is accesible to the user. Furthermore, the rotatable disc **56** is configured to sit in the body **54**. In most cases, the rotatable disc **56** is positioned in a plane that is substantially parallel to a plane defined substantially by the external surface **66** of the body **54** in which the rotatable disc **56** sits (e.g., front portion **60**). By having the rotatable disc **56** sit in the surface **66** of the body **54**, the user can click on