

be reduced to approximately 0.2 millimeters or less. Furthermore, as recognized by those of ordinary skill in the art, the overall scope of the claimed invention is not limited by specific dimensions, and may include other display units **70** applicable to a variety of gaming unit types such as upright gaming units, flat top (tabletop) gaming units, slanted gaming units, gaming units having jumbo screens, palm-sized gaming units, etc.

[0039] Referring to **FIGS. 2 and 3**, the screen of the video display unit **70** may be approximately the same size as the frontal area of the gaming unit **20**, such that the screen may take up almost the entire frontal area of the gaming unit **20**. This allows the screen to be apportioned into almost any number of display areas of varying shapes, placement, and dimensions, limited only by the size of the frontal area of the gaming unit **20** (i.e., approximately the size of the screen of the video display unit **70**). Furthermore, as shown in **FIG. 3** the video display unit **70** may sit within the main housing **50a** of the gaming unit **20**. The orientation of the video display unit **70** may also vary from upright, slanted, tabletop or bartop. With some video display technologies, it is also possible that the video display unit **70** may be flexible thereby allowing curves to be included in the video display unit's orientation. However, as mentioned above, multiple video display units **70** may be used in the gaming unit **20**. Together the screens of the multiple display units **70** may be approximately the same size as the frontal area of the gaming unit **20**.

[0040] The video display unit **70** may comprise a large area plasma display panel (PDP), a liquid crystal display (LCD), a liquid crystal on silicon (LCOS) display, a light emitting diode (LED) display, a ferroelectric LCD display, a field emissions display (FED), an electroluminescent display (ELD), a front projection display, a rear projection display, and a microelectromechanical device (MEM) display such as a digital micromirror device (DMD) display or a grating light valves (GLV) display, etc. The video display unit **70** may further include organic display technologies such as an organic electroluminescent (OEL) display and an organic light emitting diode (OLED) display, as well as a light emitting polymer display. The video display unit **70** is not limited to flat-panel-display (FPD) technology though most of the above examples are different types of FPD technology that make the depth of the video display unit **70**, and hence the gaming unit **20**, relatively thin especially as compared to a cathode ray tube (CRT) display. This may allow more gaming units **20** to be included in a given area as compared to gaming units that utilize a CRT display as well as making the gaming units **20** lighter. However, CRT display technology, include short neck or bent neck CRTs, may be used for the video display unit **70**. In addition, the video display unit **70** may be a touch-sensitive display for control of a game routine by a player such that one display area may display the gaming icons whereas a second display may display the controls for operating the game.

[0041] The housing may include a main housing **50a** and a front panel **50b**. The front panel **50b** may be removably positioned over the video display unit **70**, though the front panel **50b** may not overlie the entire video display unit **70**. For example, as seen in **FIG. 2**, the front panel **50b** may overlay about the bottom two-thirds of the video display unit **70**. The housing **50** of the gaming unit **20** may be used to frame the top display area **70b**. Similar positioning may be

accomplished with multiple video display units **70**, where the front panel **50b** may be removably positioned over only one or more, but not all, of the video display units **70** or partially over a video display unit **70**. However, as an alternative embodiment, the front panel **50b** may also overlay the entire video display unit **70** as shown in **FIG. 3**, or all the video display units **70** in the case of multiple video display units.

[0042] The front panel **50b** may be designed in relation to the game routine(s) that are played on the gaming unit **20** or designed in accordance with an overall theme of a group or carousel of gaming units. If the gaming unit **20** is reprogrammed with a different game routine, the front panel **50b** may be removed and replaced with a new front panel having a design corresponding to the new game routine(s). Attachment or detachment may be achieved by a variety of devices, such as screws, bolts, metal/plastic snaps, clips, or any other removable fastening devices as known in the art. Any or all of the following may be included in the front panel **50b**: the coin slot or acceptor **52**, the paper currency acceptor **54**, the ticket reader/printer **56**, the card reader **58**, the coin payout tray **64** and/or the control panel **66**. However, some or all of the above may not be included in the front panel **50b**. For example, if one or more of the components **52, 54, 56, 58, 64, 66** are too deep to be included in the front panel **50b**, for instance because they would interfere with the positioning of the video display unit **70**, the components **52, 54, 56, 58, 64, 66** may be positioned to the side of or top of the front of the gaming unit **20**, either in the front panel **50b** or in the main housing **50a**.

[0043] Alternatively or in addition, the control panel **66** may be replaced with a touch-sensitive display as mentioned above. The coin acceptor **52**, paper currency acceptor **54**, ticket reader/printer **56**, card reader **58**, and/or coin payout tray **64** may be removed in favor electronic currency transfer which may also be controlled through a touch-sensitive display. Removable connections, such as conventional computer cables, may be included to connect any of the components **52, 54, 56, 58, 64, 66** to the electronics of the gaming unit **20** yet still allow for removable detachment of the entire front panel **50b** from the rest of the gaming unit **20**. Alternatively, the connections between the components **52, 54, 56, 58, 64, 66** and the electronics of the gaming unit **20** may be wireless. The electronics of the gaming unit **20** are described below.

[0044] The front panel **50b** may further include cutouts or openings **71a, 71b, 71c** corresponding to the display areas of the gaming unit **20** (i.e., the primary display area **70a**, the top display area **70b** and the bottom display area **70c**). In the case of **FIG. 2**, the upper opening **71b** corresponding to the top display area **70b** is framed in part by the main housing **50a** of the gaming unit **20**, because the front panel **50b** does not overlie the entire video display unit **70**. However, for purposes of this disclosure the front panel **50b** will be described as having an opening **71b** for the top display area **70b**, as indicated in **FIG. 3**. In order to show video images through the openings **71a, 71b, 71c**, a computer or controller for the gaming unit **20** may include graphics software for programming the display areas **70a, 70b, 70c** to be displayed on the video display unit **70** in accordance with the shape, placement and dimensions of the openings **71a, 71b, 71c** of the front panel **50b**. The graphics software may be software similar to that used for concurrently displaying various