

lasers directed towards the outer first surface of the cylindrical surface **305**, at the point where a particular surface location of the outer first surface is in view of a player. A processor of the slot machine may control the image to be displayed by directing the proper laser to shine upon the image.

[**0191**] In one or more embodiments, a reel may comprise a surface depicting indicia that are not updateable based on a signal of a processor, in addition to one or more display devices **335**. For example, a first portion of the outer first surface of cylindrical surface **305** may comprise a surface with one or more static indicia depicted therein (e.g., a plastic, metal, or fiberglass surface with indicia painted thereon) while a second portion of the outer first surface may comprise one or more display devices **335** that are operable to update indicia based on a signal of a processor. In some embodiments, a surface with no indicia depicted thereon is interspersed with the one or more display devices **335**.

[**0192**] In one or more embodiments, moving image data may be transmitted to the reels from a stationary centralized memory with a high storage capacity. The moving image data may be transmitted to the reels when the reels are stationary via a high bandwidth connection. For example, the reels may be stationary when displaying a video clip showing a bonus round.

[**0193**] In one or more embodiments, it may be desirable to rotate a reel at a rate that is different from the refresh rate of the one or more display devices of the reel. For example, if the rotation of the reel is the same as the refresh rate of the one or more display devices the result may be an undesirable viewing effect. For example, suppose a display device refreshes at fifteen times per second. Suppose also that the reel of the display device rotates at fifteen revolutions per second. If the display device is between refreshes when first in view of the player, then the display device may appear blank to the player on every revolution of the reel. This is undesirable, in many embodiments, as the display device is meant to show an indicium to the player. Therefore, the reels may be rotated at a speed that differs substantially from the refresh rates of the one or more display devices. Alternatively, the reels may be rotated at the same rate as the refresh rate of the display devices, but the appearance of a display device in view of the player may be timed to coincide with the presence of an indicium on the display device.

[**0194**] Embodiments of the present invention have been described wherein the reel is a cylindrical shape, with display devices attached to the outer first surface of the cylindrical shape. However, in other embodiments, display devices may be attached to an elongated surface which runs along a portion of the outer first surface of the reel and conforms to the shape of the cylindrical shape of a reel along that portion but then continues beyond the cylindrical shape of the reel. The elongated surface is analogous to the cable of a ski lift. At the point where a ski carriage changes direction, the cable to which the ski carriage is attached conforms to a circular, rotating wheel. However, once a carriage has reversed direction, the cable to which it is attached no longer conforms to the wheel, and may, in fact, dangle in mid air. In this embodiment, the elongated surface to which the one or more display devices are attached may be significantly longer than the circumference of the reel. In some embodiments, the one or more display devices may

comprise the elongated surface. In such embodiments, the means for moving the one or more display devices moves the display devices in a curvilinear path. In some embodiments, the elongated surface may conform to the reel over the reel's entire length, but may be a separate surface from the cylindrical surface of the reel none-the-less.

[**0195**] In one or more embodiments, the one or more display devices comprising the shape of a reel may be operable to display a continuous line, shape, or other image along the expanse of the outer first surface of the reel. For example, a reel may display a line of continuously varying thickness that runs in the direction of rotation of the reel. Therefore, as the reel rotates, the player sees a different portion of the line at different angular positions of the reel. Furthermore, display devices out of the player's view, or portions of a single display device which are out of the player's view, may update their displayed images, so that the portion of the line shown need not repeat. The player may obtain a winning outcome by, for example, having the reels stop so that the currently displayed line thickness displayed along a payline of the slot machine on each reel is the same. Commonly-owned, co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/391,034, filed Mar. 17, 2003 and entitled ELEC-TRONIC AMUSEMENT DEVICE AND METHOD FOR OPERATING A GAME OFFERING CONTINUOUS REELS describes embodiments where a continuous line may be displayed along a length of a reel surface. This application is incorporated by reference herein for all purposes.

[**0196**] In various embodiments of the present invention, multiple reels may rotate in tandem without limiting the number of indicia combinations, or outcomes, that can be displayed to the player. This is because reels of the present invention may change the indicia currently being displayed. For example, suppose three display devices are in the same relative angular positions, but on three separate reels. When first viewed by the player, the first display device (or a particular angular surface location of the first display device) shows "bar," the second "plum," and the third "orange." Together, they make "bar-plum-orange." However, when the reels rotate so that the three display devices are no longer in view of the player, the first display device may switch to "bell," the second to "cherry," and the third to "bell." Now the three display devices show "bell-cherrybell." The next time the three display devices come in view of the player, the player sees an outcome he hadn't seen the last time around, even though he is seeing the same three display devices or the same three angular surface locations of the same three devices.

[**0197**] In some embodiments of the present invention, the display devices may display messages to a player indicating the state or the mode of a slot machine. For example, the slot machine may be in a locked or reserved state, in which case a player might not be allowed to use the slot machine unless he knows the proper password, or unless he inserts the proper player-tracking card. A reserved slot machine might display, for example, "reserved." The state or mode of a slot machine might describe the way in which a slot machine will pay out. For example, a slot machine in a "don't" mode may pay out only for outcomes that are typically regarded as losing outcomes, and may not pay out for outcomes that are typically regarded as winning outcomes. A slot machine in "insurance" mode may guarantee a player a payment equal