

the memory of the main controller **100** may include multiple RAMs **106** and multiple program memories **102**. Although the I/O circuit **108** is shown as a single block, it should be appreciated that the I/O circuit **108** may include a number of different types of I/O circuits. The RAM(s) **104** and program memory (or memories) **102** may be implemented as semiconductor memories, magnetically readable memories, and/or optically readable memories, for example.

[0054] The program memory **102** may comprise a read-only memory (ROM), a read/write or alterable memory, such as a hard disk, a flash memory, an erasable programable read-only memory (EPROM), an electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM), etc. In the event a hard disk is used as a program memory, the address/data bus **110** shown schematically in **FIG. 3** may comprise multiple address/data buses, which may be of different types, and there may be an I/O circuit disposed between the address/data buses.

[0055] The gaming unit **20** may also include a secondary display controller **114** operatively coupled to the main controller **100** and the secondary display unit **88**. The secondary display controller **114** may comprise a program memory, a microcontroller or microprocessor, a RAM, and an I/O circuit (all not shown), which may be of similar types as described above with reference to the main controller **100**. The secondary display controller **114** may be operatively coupled to the main controller **100** via the I/O circuit **108**.

[0056] **FIG. 3** illustrates that the control panel **66**, the coin acceptor **52**, the bill acceptor **54**, the card reader **58**, the ticket reader/printer **56** and the display unit **70** may be operatively coupled to the I/O circuit **108**, each of those components being so coupled by either a unidirectional or bidirectional, single-line or multiple-line data link, which may depend on the design of the component that is used. The links may each comprise a serial communication link and/or a parallel communication link. The speaker(s) **62** may be operatively coupled to a sound circuit **112**, that may comprise a voice- and sound-synthesis circuit or that may comprise a driver circuit. The sound-generating circuit **112** may be coupled to the I/O circuit **108**.

[0057] As shown in **FIG. 3**, the components **52**, **54**, **56**, **58**, **66**, **70**, and **112** may be connected to the I/O circuit **108** via one or more respective direct lines or conductors. Different connection schemes could be used. For example, one or more of the components shown in **FIG. 3** may be connected to the I/O circuit **108** via a common bus or other data link that is shared by a number of components. Furthermore, some of the components may be directly connected to the microprocessor **104** without passing through the I/O circuit **108**.

[0058] In one embodiment, the secondary display controller **114** may be operatively coupled to the microprocessor **104** via a plurality of communication links. For example, a first communication link may be used for sending and/or receiving control information to/from the secondary display controller **114**, while a second communication link may be used for downloading software to the secondary display controller **114**. In other embodiments, may be operatively coupled to the microprocessor **104** via one communication links.

[0059] Although the main controller **100** and the secondary display controller **114** are shown as separate devices in

**FIG. 3**, it should be noted that such a representation is merely exemplary and that the functionality of both devices could be incorporated into a single device. For example, the microprocessor **104** could perform some or all of the operations carried out by the secondary display controller **114**.

#### Overall Operation of Gaming Unit

[0060] One manner in which one or more of the gaming units **20** (and one or more of the gaming units **30**) may operate is described below in connection with a number of flowcharts which represent a number of portions or routines of one or more computer programs, which may be stored in one or more of the memories of the main controller **100**. The computer program(s) or portions thereof may be stored remotely, outside of the gaming unit **20**, and may control the operation of the gaming unit **20** from a remote location. Such remote control may be facilitated with the use of a wireless connection, or by an Internet interface that connects the gaming unit **20** with a remote computer (such as one of the network computers **22**, **32**) having a memory in which the computer program portions are stored. The computer program portions may be written in any high level language such as C, C+, C++ or the like or any low-level, assembly or machine language. By storing the computer program portions therein, various portions of the memory or memories **102**, **106** of the main controller **100** and the memory or memories of the secondary display controller **114** are physically and/or structurally configured in accordance with computer program instructions.

[0061] **FIG. 4** is a flowchart of a main operating routine **200** that may be stored in the memory of the main controller **100**. Referring to **FIG. 4**, the main routine **200** may begin operation at block **202** during which an attraction sequence may be performed in an attempt to induce a potential player in a casino to play the gaming unit **20**. The attraction sequence may be performed by displaying one or more video images on the primary display unit **84** and/or causing one or more sound segments, such as voice or music, to be generated via the speakers **62**. The attraction sequence may include a scrolling list of games that may be played on the gaming unit **20** and/or video images of various games being played, such as video poker, video blackjack, video slots, video keno, video bingo, etc.

[0062] During performance of the attraction sequence, if a potential player makes any input to the gaming unit **20** as determined at block **204**, the attraction sequence may be terminated and a game-selection display may be generated on the primary display unit **84** at block **206** to allow the player to select a game available on the gaming unit **20**. The gaming unit **20** may detect an input at block **204** in various ways. For example, the gaming unit **20** could detect if the player presses any button on the gaming unit **20**; the gaming unit **20** could determine if the player deposited one or more coins into the gaming unit **20**; the gaming unit **20** could determine if player deposited paper currency into the gaming unit; etc.

[0063] The game-selection display generated at block **206** may include, for example, a list of video games that may be played on the gaming unit **20** and/or a visual message to prompt the player to deposit value into the gaming unit **20**. While the game-selection display is generated, the gaming unit **20** may wait for the player to make a game selection.