

## DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

[0021] Turning now to the drawings, **FIG. 1** depicts a gaming terminal **10** operable to conduct a wagering game such as slots, poker, keno, bingo, or blackjack. Generally, the terminal **10** receives a wager from a player to purchase a play of the game. In response, the terminal **10** generates at least one random event using a random number generator (RNG) and provides an award to the player for a winning outcome of the random event. Alternatively, the terminal **10** may be linked to a remote host computer that generates the random event and transmits the event's outcome to the terminal **10**. To portray the outcome to the player, the terminal **10** includes a video display **12** as shown or a mechanical display. The video display **12** may be implemented with a CRT, LCD, plasma, or other type of video display known in the art. To allow the player to place wagers, make game selections, and otherwise operate the terminal **10**, the terminal **10** includes a physical button panel **14** or a touch screen over the video display **12**.

[0022] Operation of the terminal **10** is described in greater detail below in the context of a video slot game. The video slot game is implemented on the video display **12** on a number of video simulated spinning reels **16** with a number of pay lines **18**. Each of the pay lines **18** extends through one symbol on each of the reels **16**. Generally, game play is initiated by inserting money or playing a number of credits, causing the terminal's central processing unit/CPU (see **FIG. 2**) to activate a number of pay lines corresponding to the amount of money or number of credits played. In one embodiment, the player selects the number of pay lines to play by pressing a "Select Lines" touch key on the display **12**. The player then chooses the number of coins or credits to bet on the selected pay lines by pressing a "Bet Per Line" touch key.

[0023] After activation of the pay lines, the reels **16** may be set in motion by pressing a "Spin Reels" touch key or, if the player wishes to bet the maximum amount per line, by using a "Max Bet Spin" touch key on the display **12**. Alternatively, other mechanisms such as a lever or push button may be used to set the reels in motion. The CPU uses a random number generator to select a game outcome (e.g., "basic" game outcome) corresponding to a particular set of reel "stop positions." The CPU then causes each of the video reels **16** to stop at the appropriate stop position. Video symbols are displayed on the reels **16** to graphically illustrate the reel stop positions and indicate whether the stop positions of the reels represent a winning game outcome.

[0024] Winning basic game outcomes (e.g., symbol combinations resulting in payment of coins or credits) are identifiable to the player by a pay table. In one embodiment, the pay table is affixed to the terminal **10** and/or displayed by the display **12** in response to a command by the player (e.g., by pressing a "Pay Table" touch key). A winning basic game outcome occurs when the symbols appearing on the reels **16** along an active pay line correspond to one of the winning combinations on the pay table. A winning combination, for example, could be three or more matching symbols along an active pay line, where the award is greater as the number of matching symbols along the active pay line increases. If the displayed symbols stop in a winning combination, the game credits the player an amount correspond-

ing to the award in the pay table for that combination multiplied by the amount of credits bet on the winning pay line. The player may collect the amount of accumulated credits by pressing a "Collect" touch key. In one implementation, the winning combinations start from the first reel (left to right) and span adjacent reels. In an alternative implementation, the winning combinations start from either the first reel (left to right) or the fifth reel (right to left) and span adjacent reels.

[0025] Included among the plurality of basic game outcomes may be one or more start-feature outcomes for triggering play of special features. A start-feature outcome may be defined in any number of ways. For example, a start-feature outcome may occur when a special start-feature symbol or a special combination of symbols appears on one or more of the reels **16**. The start-feature outcome may require the combination of symbols to appear along an active pay line, or may alternatively require that the combination of symbols appear anywhere on the display **12** regardless of whether the symbols are along an active pay line. The appearance of a start-feature outcome causes the CPU to shift operation from the video slot game to the special feature associated with that outcome.

[0026] In accordance with the present invention, the gaming terminal **10** includes a speaker arrangement for emitting multi-channel audio associated with the wagering game in surround sound relative to a player in front of the terminal **10**. Surround sound refers to the use of sound to envelop the player, making the player feel like he or she is in the middle of the action. The multi-channel audio allows the player to hear sounds coming from around the player and may cause the player to become captivated in the game experience. The speaker arrangement for emitting the audio in surround sound includes both a "front" speaker arrangement and a "surround sound" speaker arrangement. Any speakers of the speaker arrangement may be linked to the terminal's CPU by speaker wire or a wireless connection.

[0027] There are several embodiments of the front speaker arrangement. In one embodiment shown in **FIG. 1**, the front speaker arrangement includes a left speaker **30** and a right speaker **32** mounted within a cabinet of the gaming terminal **10**. In an alternative embodiment, the front speaker arrangement includes a single center speaker. In another alternative embodiment, the front speaker arrangement includes a left speaker, a right speaker, and a center speaker.

[0028] There are several embodiments of the surround sound speaker arrangement. In an embodiment shown in **FIGS. 2A and 2B**, the speaker arrangement includes a rear left speaker **20** and a rear right speaker **22** generally behind the player. A rear center speaker (see **FIG. 4** for placement) is optional. The speakers **20** and **22** are mounted to a chair **26** on which the player can sit. In an alternative embodiment shown in **FIG. 3**, the speakers **20** and **22** are positioned generally on opposite sides of the player and remote from the terminal. In an alternative embodiment shown in **FIG. 4**, the speaker arrangement includes only a rear center speaker **24** generally behind the player.

[0029] In an embodiment shown in **FIG. 5**, the surround sound speaker arrangement includes a rear left speaker **50a**, a rear right speaker **52a**, and an optional rear center speaker (see **FIG. 6** for placement) generally behind the player **56a** at the terminal **10a**. The speakers **50a** and **52a** are mounted