sounds, which emulating sounds may be presented in stereo and/or may provide haptic feedback for added realistic effects.

[0010] In various embodiments of the present invention, a processor-based gaming machine adapted for accepting a wager, playing a game based on the wager and granting a payout based on the result of the game is provided. Such a gaming machine can include an exterior housing arranged to contain various internal gaming machine components therein, a master gaming controller in communication with various internal gaming machine components and adapted to execute or control one or more aspects of the wager based game, a display device in communication with the master gaming controller and adapted to present a plurality of simulated rotating reels, and one or more speakers in communication with the master gaming controller and adapted to present sounds with respect to the simulated rotating reels.

[0011] The processor-based gaming machine can also include a reel spin timer in communication with the master gaming controller and/or display device, with such a reel spin timer being adapted to vary the spin times of the simulated rotating reels from one game play to another. The processor-based gaming machine can also include a reel sound generator in communication with the master gaming controller and/or one or more speakers, with such a reel sound generator being adapted to provide sounds to one or more speakers with respect to the simulated rotating reels, wherein the provided sounds vary from one game play to another.

[0012] In various embodiments, a wager-based gaming system having a plurality of processor-based gaming machines is provided. Such processor-based gaming machines can include any of those recited herein having virtual or simulated rotating reels. The wager-based gaming system can also include a remote host in communication with each of the processor-based gaming machines, with the remote host being adapted to download reel spin times and/or reel sounds to the networked gaming machines. The wager-based gaming system can also include at least one reel spin timer and/or reel sound generator in communication with the remote host, the gaming machines or both. A reel spin timer and/or reel sound generator can be located at the remote host, within one or more of the gaming machines, or both.

[0013] Further features and items may also be found in any of the foregoing embodiments, and it will be readily appreciated that various combinations of the following features and items may be used. For example, the display device can comprise a multi-layer display having a plurality of display screens positioned front to back with respect to each other. In addition, the speakers can comprise a plurality of dedicated reel speakers located in close proximity to the display of the simulated rotating reels. In some embodiments, each of the dedicated reel speakers corresponds to one simulated rotating reel, and in some embodiments, the dedicated reel speakers are collectively adapted to present stereophonic sounds with respect to the simulated rotating reels.

[0014] In various embodiments, the reel spin timer can be adapted to vary spin times from one game play to another based upon random selections from a plurality of acceptable spin times. Such acceptable spin times can be based upon sampling actual physical reels from a mechanical or electromechanical reel-type gaming machine. In various embodiments, the reel sound generator can be adapted to vary the provided sounds from one game play to another based upon random selections from one or more stored sound files. Such stored sound files can similarly be based upon sampling actual physical reels from a mechanical or electromechanical reel-type gaming machine. Various storage devices can be associated with the reel spin timer, reel sound generator, or both. The processor-based gaming machine can also include a network interface coupling the gaming machine to one or more remotely located networked components, with such a network interface adapted to facilitate the downloading of reel spin times, reel sounds, or both to the gaming machine.

[0015] In further embodiments, various methods of presenting simulated reels on a processor-based gaming machine may also be provided. Such methods can include a first step of displaying on a display device of the processor-based gaming machine a plurality of simulated reels in a static, non-rotating position. Additional steps can include accepting a monetary value wager from a player, accepting a game-related input from the player and initiating the play of a wager-based game as a result of the game-related input. Further method steps can involve determining reel spin times for each of the simulated reels, with such reel spin times varying from one game play to another of reel-type games on said processor-based gaming machine, and then presenting on the display the simulated reels in rotational motion, wherein such presentation is based at least in part on the determined reel spin times for each of the simulated reels. Additional steps can include generating reel sounds for each of the simulated reels, with such reel sounds varying from one game play to another, and also presenting these generated reel sounds on one or more speakers of the processor-based gaming machine.

[0016] Other methods, features and advantages of the invention will be or will become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following figures and detailed description. It is intended that all such additional methods, features and advantages be included within this description, be within the scope of the invention, and be protected by the accompanying claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] The included drawings are for illustrative purposes and serve only to provide examples of possible structures and process steps for the disclosed inventive gaming reels and methods of presentation therefor.

[0018] FIG. **1** illustrates in perspective view an exemplary gaming machine.

[0019] FIG. **2** illustrates in block diagram format an exemplary network infrastructure for providing a gaming system having one or more gaming machines.

[0020] FIG. **3**A illustrates in partial perspective view three exemplary adjacent rotating reels adapted for use in a gaming machine.

[0021] FIG. **3**B illustrates a screenshot in front elevation view of five exemplary adjacent virtual rotating reels adapted for use in a processor-based gaming machine.

[0022] FIG. **4** illustrates in partial perspective and cut-away view an exemplary processor-based gaming machine having a multi-layer display according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] FIG. **5** illustrates in block diagram format various components of an exemplary processor-based gaming machine adapted to provide realistic emulations of physical reels both visually and audibly according to one embodiment of the present invention.