

hand poker game. For card games that require more cards, additional hold/draw buttons may be generated. For card games that require less than five cards, fewer hold/draw buttons may be defined.

[0096] The game input interface display may be configured for different types of games. For example, in FIG. 4A, input buttons for a card game are generated. As another example, in FIG. 4B, input buttons are generated for a slot game. For slot game, input buttons, 715, 716, 717 and 718 are generated. When activated, input buttons 715, 716 and 717 allow a game player to play 1 payline, 3 paylines or 5 paylines in a slot game. The start game button 705, used in FIG. 4A, is not used. Instead, a spin button 718 may be used to initiate the game of chance.

[0097] In one embodiment of the present invention, different games of chance may be played on the same gaming machine. The games of chance may be selected by a player or an operator of the gaming machine. For each type of game of chance that may be played on the gaming machine, a unique game input interface display may be generated. The game input interface display may include but is not limited 1) a number of input buttons, 2) text/graphical information displayed for each button, 3) a color, a shape, a size and position for each button and 4) patterns and colors surrounding the buttons. In addition, metering information such as a number of credits or a progress in a bonus game may be displayed on the game input interface display 700.

[0098] When the game of chance that is played on the gaming machine is changed, the GIID 700 may be changed. For example, during game play session on the gaming machine comprising a plurality of games, a player may first choose to play a card game using the GIID 700 in FIG. 4A. Then, the player may choose to play a slot game and the GIID 700 may be configured to the layout shown in FIG. 4B.

[0099] In another embodiment, the game input interface display may be configured for other gaming machine functions. For instance, when internet or a messaging service is provided on a gaming machine, the GIID may be configured to display a text keyboard. In another example, a maintenance/diagnostic input configuration may be generated when the gaming machine for maintenance procedures performed on the gaming machine.

[0100] In yet another embodiment, the matrix of electro-luminescent elements may only occupy a number of areas of the GIID 700. In FIGS. 4A and 4B, since the "max bet" button 702, 704 and 706, these buttons may be generated using electroluminescent elements in the shape of the text on the buttons (see FIG. 6) and a matrix of electro-luminescent elements may not be used. For this type of lamp element, the text on the buttons defined by the shape of the lamp may not be changed.

[0101] A number of electro-luminescent element matrices may be placed at the locations of buttons 710, 711, 712 and the region 720. For instance, a small matrix of elements may be generated that allow a number of text characters to be generated on the buttons. The outline of the buttons may be generated using a graphics layer. Using the lamp matrices defined at the location of each button, the text on the buttons may be changed. For example, "hold/draw" text in button 710 may be changed to the "1 payline," text in 715. However, the position or the shape of the button may not be changed.

[0102] A larger electro-luminescent lamp matrix is located in region 720. With this matrix, a number of buttons may be changed. For example, two "hold/draw" buttons, 713 and 714, are shown in FIG. 4A. In FIG. 4B, a single "spin" button 718 is drawn with the matrix in region 720. The size of the single spin button 718 is larger than the size of each of the hold/draw buttons, 713 and 714.

[0103] FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a game service interface display (GSID) 250 using a thin light-emitting interface display of the present invention. The format of the GSID 250 is provided for illustrative purposes only. The GSID 250 comprises a 16 character display 254, a nine button key pad with number buttons such as 251, two function buttons, 212 and 213, an enter button, a forward button 252, a back space button 253 and a clear button 214. The display 254 may be comprised of a plurality of electro-luminescent elements such as OLEDs that are individually controlled. For example, each character of the 16-character display may include 7 light-emitting elements. The elements of in each character of the display 254 may be activated in different patterns to generate a number of alpha-numeric symbols. The present invention is not limited to a 1-line 16 character display. Displays that allows multiple lines of text to be displayed with a greater number of characters in each line may be used with the present invention. For instance, the GSID 250 configuration in FIG. 5 may be generated from a matrix of electro-luminescent elements similar to one embodiment of the game input interface display described with respect to FIGS. 4A and 4B.

[0104] The key pad buttons with the back space and forward keys may be used to enter numbers and text. The buttons may include a sensor layer used to detect when the buttons have been activated. The buttons and display 254 may be used to send and/or receive text messages to/from other game players and casino personnel. The text that is input via the GSID 250 or received text from another device may be displayed on the display 254. For example, using the GSID 250, a player may be able to request a drink and enter a specific type, such as a "beer," which may be sent to a drink station at the casino. In another example, the GSID 250 may be used to send a text message to another device using a text messaging system. The GSID 250 may be connected to a gaming/phone network that allows the gaming machine to send messages to other devices such as cell phones, pagers and other gaming machines and receive messages from these gaming devices.

[0105] In other embodiments, the GSID 250, in the layout in FIG. 5 or in a different layout, may be used by a player to: 1) input player tracking identification information, 2) view account information and perform account transactions for accounts such as player tracking accounts and bank accounts, 3) receive operating instructions related to the player tracking unit and the gaming machine, 4) redeem prizes or comps including using player tracking points to redeem the prize or comp, 5) make entertainment service reservations, 6) transfer credits to cashless instruments and other player accounts, 7) participate in casino promotions, 8) select entertainment choices for output via video and audio output mechanisms on the player tracking unit and the gaming machine, 9) play games and bonus games, 10) perform numerical calculations using the interface as a calculator and 11) register a player for a loyalty program such as a player tracking program. In addition, the GSID 250