[0055] With respect to the "blanking" of a display screen it will be appreciated that such blanking is accomplished by rendering the affected display screen as effectively transparent, such that the visual display on one or more other screens in the multi-layer display may be perceived by a viewer without a significant interfering effect by the "blanked" display screen. In some embodiments, this can involve providing a white screen, such as in the case of a multi-layer display having stacked LCD screens, where a white screen on one LCD screen would result in an effective pass-through of whatever is being displayed on the other display screen or screens in the multi-layer stack of screens. In some embodiments, such a "blanking" of a given display screen may be accomplished simply by turning or toggling that display screen to an off position, particularly where the resting state of such a screen is transparent or substantially transparent.

[0056] In various embodiments, a "substantially blank" display on a blanked display screen may involve a predominantly clear, white, bright or otherwise transparent display or image, such that the images and texts of the other display screens in the multi-layer display device can be more readily viewed. Such a substantially blank display might be obtained, for example, by providing a general image using only white, off-white, light grey and/or other bright colors. In this manner, a generally bright and transparent background image may be perceived on the substantially blank display screen, while the more pertinent BIOS or VESA display of another display screen in the multi-layer display would be more prominent and readily visible. As one illustrative and non-limiting example, a bright image of a partly cloudy sky using all white, off-white, light grey, light blue and other bright colors might be used as a substantially blank display. As another illustrative example, a bright or light greyscaled image of a corporate logo or trademark might serve as a substantially blank display for purposes of the present invention. Such a display or image can be a stored image that is provided to the affected display screen during a screen blanking process, as described herein.

[0057] Detection of a particular video or display mode can be made by way of detecting a particular screen resolution or refresh rate. For example, screen blanking criteria can exist for specific display resolutions that are detected at 640×480 pixels, 720×400 pixels, 800×600 pixels and/or 1280×1024 pixels. As another example, screen blanking criteria can exist for a specific refresh rate that is not about 60 Hz. As is generally known, many video signals and other display signals are sent at a refresh rate of about 60 Hz. In the event that a provided display signal has a refresh rate that is not at or about 60 Hz, then such an event can constitute a screen blanking criteria, if desired. In various embodiments, it is thought that a refresh rate outside the range of about 55 to 65 Hz could result in the determination that a screen blanking criteria exists. Other specific resolutions or refresh rates may also be included, such as in a table or chart that is embedded within device firmware.

[0058] As another possibility, a screen blanking condition or criteria can be met for any screen resolution that is not a given resolution, or for any refresh rate that is lower than a given amount. Such an embodiment could take into account other video modes that are relatively "crude" and thus less likely to be intended for use on a sophisticated and coordinated multi-layer display presentation. As one particular example, virtually any video or display modes that have a resolution of 800×600 pixels or lower, or that have a refresh rate that is less than about 60 Hz, are not likely to be intended for use on a multi-layer display (i.e., the display to be used and coordinated with other displays simultaneously). Accordingly, a condition can be set that any display resolution at or below a set resolution or any refresh rate at or below a set rate would result in the detection of screen blanking criteria.

[0059] In various embodiments, it may be desirable to detect multiple screen blanking criteria before automatically blanking out one or more display screens. For example, at a detected resolution of 800×600 pixels, the refresh rates may still vary. If the refresh rate is not about 60 Hz, then the display signal may be a boot or start-up signal. However, if the refresh rate is about 60 Hz, then the display signal may be a (relatively crude) video data signal that is intended for use on a multi-layer display presentation. Thus, the display signal analyzer **414** can be configured to determine that if the resolution is equal to 800×600 pixels, then a further analysis may also be required to determine the refresh rate. A screen blanking condition might only exist then where the display resolution and refresh rate meet particular screen blanking criteria. Of course, other resolutions and refresh rates can be used, and it may be desired to facilitate a screen blanking regardless of refresh rates for certain display resolutions, while checking a refresh rate or other secondary parameter for other certain display resolutions.

[0060] FIG. **5** illustrates a flowchart of one exemplary method for automatically blanking a display screen from a multi-layer display according to one embodiment of the present invention. It will be readily appreciated that the method and illustrative flowchart provided herein are merely exemplary, and that the present invention may be practiced in a wide variety of suitable ways. While the provided flowchart may be comprehensive in some respects, it will be readily understood that not every step provided is necessary, that other steps can be included, and that the order of steps might be rearranged as desired by a given manufacturer, as desired. A first signal may be received at the display controller at step **500** from a processor, such as the master gaming controller of a gaming machine, a video processor, or any other programmable logic device. The display controller may determine the resolution of the first signal at step **502** with an analysis application.

[0061] At start-up, a user may want to run a DOS, BIOS, and any other application to test, reprogram, reconfigure, or conduct any other analysis on just one screen of a multi-layer display. However, when such programs are initially run, preprogrammed or default displays are typically displayed on all the multi-layer screens, which makes the resulting combined presentation unreadable to the user. Since a boot or start-up application would likely run at a resolution less than 800×600 pixels, an analysis application may determine the resolution of the first signal to determine whether it is a start-up signal or a normal video data signal.

[0062] If the resolution is not less than a predetermined resolution, generally 800×600 pixels, at step **504**, then the signal may be equal to the predetermined resolution at step **506**. The analysis application may then determine the refresh rate of the first signal at step **508**. The refresh rate of the first display device may vary based upon the signal received. If the refresh rate is less than about 60 Hz, then it may be a start-up signal as normal display signals generally refresh display devices at a rate of about 60 Hz. Thus, if the refresh rate is greater than the predetermined refresh rate, generally 60 Hz, then the signal is determined to be a normal video signal and transmitted to the first display and the second display devices at step **512**.

[0063] However if the resolution was less than the predetermined resolution at step **504**, or resolution was equal to the predetermined resolution at step **506** but had a refresh rate less than the predetermined refresh rate at step **510**, then the