

machines 10. Downloaded games can also include wheel-based games and/or other game types, as may be suitable for any applicable three-dimensional paylines. Such downloads can occur based on a request or command from a player or a casino operator, or can take place in an automated fashion by system 50, such as via a particular prompt or trigger.

[0054] While gaming system 50 can be a system that is specially designed and created new for use in a casino or gaming establishment, it is also possible that many items in this system can be taken or adopted from an existing gaming system. For example, gaming system 50 could represent an existing cashless gaming system or downloadable gaming system to which one or more of the inventive components or controller arrangements are added, such as controllers, storage media, and/or other components that may be associated with a dynamic display system adapted for use across multiple gaming machines and devices. In addition to new hardware, new functionality via new software, modules, updates or otherwise can be provided to an existing database 70, specialized server 61 and/or general-purpose server 60, as desired. Other modifications to an existing system may also be necessary, as might be readily appreciated.

[0055] While gaming machine 10 can typically be adapted for live game play with a physically present player, it is also contemplated that such a gaming machine may also be adapted for game play with a player at a remote gaming terminal. Other features, functions and devices may also be used in association with gaming machine 10, and it is contemplated that the present invention can be used in conjunction with a gaming machine or device that might encompass any or all such additional types of features, functions and devices. One item that is specifically contemplated for use with the present invention involves a specialized gaming machine or system adapted for the play of wager-based games that incorporate three-dimensional paylines, as described in greater detail below.

#### General Payline Applications

[0056] As is generally known in the art, a payline for a reel-type game on a wager-based gaming machine involves a designated order of consecutive reel stops on a plurality of gaming reels. Reel symbols and/or blanks that wind up on such a payline at the end of a given reel-type game typically result in a game outcome for that payline for a that reel game played on the gaming machine, which game outcome may or may not result in a win or payout to a player. Early paylines were typically only straight lines that moved in a single dimension or direction (i.e., horizontal) across all gaming reels on the gaming machine, while later developments included paylines that might also move diagonally and even zig-zag within two dimensions (i.e., horizontal and vertical) across the gaming reels.

[0057] Turning next to FIGS. 3A and 3B, two exemplary screen shots showing reel type game results are provided. It will be readily appreciated that these screen shots could be taken from, for example, primary display 26 of gaming machine 10 from FIG. 1, as well as a variety of other types of screens or displays. For example, the reels shown in both screen shots can be graphical reels generated electronically, or can be actual physical reels. FIG. 2A illustrates a screen shot 26a of an exemplary game outcome for a standard slots style game having a single payline. Three distinct gaming reels 90a, 90b, 90c having various reel symbols thereupon are made to rotate either physically or through simulated rotation

graphically after a player wager and upon a player initiation of a game play. As is generally known, after the reels stop, the symbols that fall along an appropriate payline can result in a monetary or other game award, depending upon the payable used for the game. For example, in screen shot 26b, the game outcome along single payline 91 shows three consecutive cherries, which would likely result in an award. The other bar, moon, coin, barrel and lucky 7 symbols are not accounted for in this single payline game.

[0058] FIG. 3B illustrates a screen shot 26b of an exemplary game outcome for a standard slots style game having three paylines that are played simultaneously. Three distinct gaming reels having various reel symbols thereupon are again used, as in the previous example, only here there are three paylines 91a, 91b, 91c, where an appropriate combination of symbols across any or all of the three paylines could result in a monetary award or other win. For example, paylines 91b and 91c would likely not result in any kind of award, but the three bars across payline 91a would typically result in a significant award. Although general "winning" combinations have been shown for both of these examples, it will be readily appreciated that there are also many non-winning combinations of symbols for both the one payline and three payline games. It will also be readily appreciated that while the two brief examples illustrate games played with three reels, one or three paylines, and symbols such as cherries, bars, coins and the like, that many other games may be configured and similarly played with any number of reels, paylines and assorted types of reel symbols, including blank spaces as reel symbols.

[0059] Continuing on to FIG. 4, yet another screen shot of an exemplary game outcome for a different slots style game having ten paylines is shown. Screen shot 26c actually depicts a game outcome for a "By George" virtual reel type game, and is used herein simply for purposes of illustration. As will be understood, elements of the game result in screen shot 26c are similar to those of the game results from screen shots 26a and 26b above. For example, there are a plurality of reels or simulated reels having reel symbols, various paylines, and combinations of symbols that can result in a win for a player. Notable differences include the number of reels, of which there are five, more detailed and themed reel symbols, and a notable increase in the number and complexity of paylines. Various additional graphical items and features are also included, as can be seen. Ten paylines 92a-92j are also available for play for any given reel type game played. For purposes of illustration and ease in following which lines cross which symbols, half of the paylines shown are solid lines, while the other five are broken lines. It will be understood that no significant distinction exists between the solid and broken lines.

[0060] It will be understood that the general payline applications described and illustrated with respect to FIGS. 3A and 3B utilize one-dimensional paylines, while the general payline applications described and illustrated with respect to FIG. 4 use both one-dimensional and two-dimensional paylines. The one-dimensional paylines generally extend in only one dimension (i.e., horizontally across the reels), while the two-dimensional paylines extend in both horizontal and vertical directions. Paylines 92b, 92c and 92d are examples of one-dimensional paylines, while paylines 92a, 92e and 92f are examples of two-dimensional paylines. Similar paylines may be used in the context of a plurality of gaming wheels, such as in the case of concentric gaming wheels. In such