

displays, and pertinent inputs and outputs being available to a player. Further, it is also worth noting that the term “gaming machine” may also refer to a wide variety of gaming machines in addition to traditional free standing gaming machines. Such other gaming machines can include kiosks, set-top boxes for use with televisions in hotel rooms and elsewhere, and many server based systems that permit players to log in and play remotely, such as at a personal computer or PDA. All such gaming machines can be considered “gaming machines” for embodiments described herein and following discussion, with all of the disclosed metering techniques and devices being adaptable for such uses of alternative gaming machines and devices.

[0075] With reference to FIG. 6B, the gaming machine of FIG. 6A is illustrated in perspective view with its main door opened. In addition to the various exterior items described above, such as top box 11, main cabinet 12 and primary video displays 18, gaming machine 10 also comprises a variety of internal components. As will be readily understood by those skilled in the art, gaming machine 10 contains a variety of locks and mechanisms, such as main door lock 36 and latch 37. Internal portions of coin acceptor 22 and bill or ticket scanner 23 can also be seen, along with the physical meters associated with these peripheral devices. Processing system 50 includes computer architecture, as will be discussed in further detail below.

[0076] When a person wishes to play a gaming machine 10, he or she provides coins, cash or a credit device to a scanner included in the gaming machine. The scanner may comprise a bill scanner or a similar device configured to read printed information on a credit device such as a paper ticket or magnetic scanner that reads information from a plastic card. The credit device may be stored in the interior of the gaming machine. During interaction with the gaming machine, the person views game information using a video display. Usually, during the course of a game, a player is required to make a number of decisions that affect the outcome of the game. The player makes these choices using a set of player-input switches.

[0077] After the player has completed interaction with the gaming machine, the player may receive a portable credit device from the machine that includes any credit resulting from interaction with the gaming machine. By way of example, the portable credit device may be a ticket having a dollar value produced by a printer within the gaming machine. A record of the credit value of the device may be stored in a memory device provided on a gaming machine network (e.g., a memory device associated with validation terminal and/or processing system in the network). Any credit on some devices may be used for further games on other gaming machines 10. Alternatively, the player may redeem the device at a designated change booth or pay machine.

[0078] Gaming machine 10 can be used to play any primary game, bonus game, progressive or other type of game. Other wagering games can enable a player to cause different events to occur based upon how hard the player pushes on a touch screen. For example, a player could cause reels or objects to move faster by pressing harder on the exterior touch screen. In these types of games, the gaming machine can enable the player to interact in the 3-D by varying the amount of pressure the player applies to a touchscreen.

[0079] As indicated above, gaming machine 10 also enables a person to view information and graphics generated on one display screen while playing a game that is generated

on another display screen. Such information and graphics can include game paytables, game-related information, entertaining graphics, background, history or game theme-related information or information not related to the game, such as advertisements. The gaming machine can display this information and graphics adjacent to a game, underneath or behind a game or on top of a game. For example, a gaming machine could display paylines on the frontmost display screen and also display a reel game on an underlying display screen, and the paylines could fade in and fade out periodically.

[0080] A gaming machine includes one or more master gaming controllers and/or processors and memory that cooperate to output games and gaming interaction functions from stored memory. FIG. 7 illustrates a control configuration for use in a gaming machine. Processor 332 is a microprocessor or microcontroller-based platform that is capable of causing a display system 18 to output video data such as symbols, cards, images of people, characters, places, and objects which function in the gaming device. Processor 332 may include a commercially available microprocessor provided by a variety of vendors known to those of skill in the art. Gaming machine 10 may also include one or more application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) or other hardwired devices. Furthermore, although the processor 332 and memory device 334 reside on each gaming machine, it is possible to provide some or all of their functions at a central location such as a network server for communication to a playing station such as over a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), Internet connection, microwave link, and the like.

[0081] Memory 334 may include one or more memory modules, flash memory or another type of conventional memory that stores executable programs that are used by the processing system to control components in a layered display system. Memory 334 can include any suitable software and/or hardware structure for storing data, including a tape, CD-ROM, floppy disk, hard disk or any other optical or magnetic storage media. Memory 334 may also include a) random access memory (RAM) 340 for storing event data or other data generated or used during a particular game and b) read only memory (ROM) 342 for storing program code that controls functions on the gaming machine such as playing a game.

[0082] A player uses one or more input devices 338, such as a pull arm, play button, bet button or cash out button to input signals into the gaming machine. One or more of these functions could also be employed on a touch screen. In such embodiments, the gaming machine includes a touch screen controller 16a that communicates with a video controller 346 and processor 332. A player can input signals into the gaming machine by touching the appropriate locations on the touchscreen.

[0083] Processor 332 is also connected to a currency acceptor 326 such as the coin slot or bill acceptor. Processor 332 can operate instructions that require a player to deposit a certain amount of money in order to start the game.

[0084] Although the processing system shown in FIG. 7 is one specific processing system, it is by no means the only processing system architecture on which embodiments described herein can be implemented. Regardless of the processing system configuration, it may employ one or more memories or memory modules configured to store program instructions for gaming machine network operations and operations associated with layered display systems described herein. Such memory or memories may also be configured to