

GAMING MACHINE WITH SUPERIMPOSED DISPLAY IMAGE

RELATED FILES

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/321,896, filed Dec. 17, 2002, entitled "GAMING MACHINE WITH SUPERIMPOSED DISPLAY IMAGE" which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/862,574, filed May 22, 2001, entitled "REEL SPINNING SLOT MACHINE WITH SUPERIMPOSED VIDEO IMAGE," now U.S. Pat. No. 6,517,433; each of the above are hereby incorporated by reference.

FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates generally to gaming machines and, more particularly, to a gaming machine with a video image superimposed over a primary display of the machine.

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BACKGROUND

[0004] A reel spinning slot machine generally comprises a plurality of mechanical rotatable reels controlled by a processor. In response to a wager, the processor randomly selects an outcome from a plurality of possible outcomes and then causes the reels to be rotated and stopped to display the selected outcome. The selected outcome is represented by certain symbols on the reels being in visual association with a display area. If the selected outcome corresponds to a winning outcome identified on a pay table, the processor instructs a payoff mechanism to award a payoff for that winning outcome to the player in the form of coins or credits.

[0005] Heretofore, the display area of reel spinning slot machines has been fairly mundane. Any proposals for changing the appearance of the display area have been fairly minor and limited in capability. For example, in U.S. Pat. No. 6,056,642 to Bennett, reel symbols are colored by backlighting the symbols with colored light bulbs or similar means. In U.S. Pat. No. 6,027,115 to Griswold et al., the reels themselves contain electroluminescent elements that define one or more reel symbols, such as cherries, bars, a number "7," etc. If multiple electroluminescent elements are provided for a particular symbol, that symbol may be displayed in multiple formats. Although the above proposals change the appearance of the display area to some extent, a need exists for a spinning reel slot machine with a structure capable of effecting more extravagant changes to the appearance of the display area.

[0006] As a result, there is a need in the art for the present invention.

SUMMARY

[0007] The above-mentioned shortcomings, disadvantages and problems are addressed by the present invention, which will be understood by reading and studying the following specification.

[0008] Accordingly, a gaming machine comprises a primary gaming display for presenting the outcome of a wagering or bonus game and a video display. In response to a wager, an outcome is generated and displayed in a display area. The video display provides a video image superimposed upon primary game display. The video image may be interactive with the primary game display and include such graphics as payout values, a pay table, pay lines, bonus game features, special effects, thematic scenery, and instructional information.

[0009] The present invention is advantageous in that it is capable of effecting extravagant changes to the appearance of the display area and displaying the graphics within the player's focus (i.e., the mechanical reels).

[0010] The present invention describes systems, clients, servers, methods, and computer-readable media of varying scope. In addition to the aspects and advantages of the present invention described in this summary, further aspects and advantages of the invention will become apparent by reference to the drawings and by reading the detailed description that follows.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The foregoing and other advantages of the invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description and upon reference to the drawings.

[0012] FIG. 1a is a perspective view of a gaming machine embodying the present invention.

[0013] FIG. 1b is a side view of a game display according to embodiments of the invention.

[0014] FIG. 1c is an isometric view of a spinning reel slot machine embodying the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 1d is a side view of a gaming machine according to alternative embodiments of the invention.

[0016] FIG. 2a is a side view of a slot machine embodiment with portions broken away to reveal internal structure in accordance with embodiments of the present invention.

[0017] FIG. 2b is a side view of a slot machine embodiment with portions broken away to reveal internal structure in accordance with alternative embodiments of the present invention.

[0018] FIGS. 3 through 11 are front views of a display area of the slot machine with various video images superimposed on the mechanical reels.

[0019] FIG. 12 is a block diagram of a control system suitable for operating the gaming machine.

[0020] While the invention is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments have been shown by way of example in the drawings and will be described in detail herein. It should be understood, however, that the invention is not intended to be limited to the particular forms disclosed. Rather, the invention is to cover