

GAMING DEVICE HAVING CONTINUOUS RHYTHM REEL SOUND

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates generally to gaming systems, and more specifically to computerized slot gaming systems having continuous reel sound.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] A wide variety of gaming devices are now available to gamers and to casino operators in computerized form, from slot machines to games that are traditionally played live such as poker and blackjack. These computerized games provide many benefits to the game owner and to the gambler, including greater reliability than can be achieved with a mechanical game or human dealer, more variety and animation in presentation of a game, and a lower overall cost of production and management.

[0003] Computerized video game systems must be designed with many of the same concerns as their mechanical and table game ancestors—they must be fair, they must provide sufficient feedback to the gamer to make the game fun to play, and they must meet a variety of gaming regulations to ensure that both the machine owner and gamer are honest and fairly treated in implementing the game. Further, they must provide a gaming experience that is at least as attractive as the older mechanical gaming machine experience to the gamer, to ensure success in a competitive gaming market.

[0004] Many computer elements have been employed in gaming systems, from computerized animation to playing prerecorded sounds through a gaming system's speakers. These are carefully designed, along with the general theme and other elements of a gaming system, to attract the attention of gamers and to provide a memorable gaming experience. But, because certain sounds associated with common actions repeat, some sounds can become repetitive. In video or mechanical reel slot systems in particular, rotating reels are typically accompanied by replayed music or rhythmic sounds. When a player plays the same reel slot game repeatedly, the sound repeats each time the reels spin, starting over for a few seconds and stopping again each time the reels spin. The sound can become not only repetitive, but can disrupt the flow of the game as it stops and restarts repeatedly.

[0005] It is therefore desired to employ a reel sound for slot systems presenting the game player with greater continuity in sound, to enhance flow and feel of game play.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides in one embodiment a computerized gaming system having an audio module that is operable to play an audio track during reel spins of a reel slot machine game, such that audio track rhythm is maintained over multiple reel spins. Rhythm is maintained in various embodiments such as by fading a looping audio track in and out or in and to a reduced volume, or by tracking rhythm and restarting audio track play from a point calculated to maintain rhythm from a previous reel spin.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0007] FIG. 1 shows a computerized reel slot gaming system having an audio module consistent with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0008] In the following detailed description of sample embodiments of the invention, reference is made to the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration specific sample embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. These embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, and it is to be understood that other embodiments may be utilized and that logical, mechanical, electrical, and other changes may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense, and the scope of the invention is defined only by the appended claims.

[0009] The present invention provides in one embodiment a computerized gaming system having an audio module that is operable to play an audio track during reel spins of a reel slot machine game, such that audio track rhythm is maintained over multiple reel spins. Rhythm is maintained in various embodiments such as by fading a looping audio track in and out or in and to a reduced volume, or by tracking rhythm and restarting audio track play from a point calculated to maintain rhythm from a previous reel spin. More detailed examples of the present invention are presented here to further illustrate how the present invention as claimed may be practiced in different embodiments.

[0010] FIG. 1 illustrates a computerized reel slot machine gaming system having an audio module, consistent with an embodiment of the present invention. The computerized gaming system shown generally at 100 is a video gaming system, which displays information for at least one game of chance on video display 101. Alternate embodiments of the invention will have other game indicators, such as mechanical reels instead of the video graphics reels 102. The game of chance is played and controlled with various buttons 102, and in some embodiments also with a pull arm 104 to initiate reel spin. Value is wagered on the games, such as with tokens, coins, bills, or cards that hold value. The wagered value is conveyed to the machine through a changer 105 or a card reader 106, and winnings are returned via the returned value card or through the coin tray 107.

[0011] When the reels 102 are set to spin, a reel sound is typically played through speakers 108 to provide additional sensation of motion or action to the game player. When the reels stop spinning, the reel spin sounds are stopped. In typical systems, the played sound is restarted each time the reels are set spinning, resulting in a discontinuous audio presentation. The present invention seeks in some embodiments to provide a less disjointed game playing experience, by maintaining rhythm of the reel spin sounds across multiple spins of the reel.

[0012] In one example embodiment of the invention, the user begins playing the gaming machine 100 by depositing monetary value through coin, token, card, or other means, and pulls pull arm 104 to initiate reel spin. When the reels start spinning, an audio track having a discernible rhythm is played through speakers 108. In various embodiments of the invention, the reels may have independent sounds, or a single sound may be played indicating spinning for all reels. When the reels stop, the sound stops or is attenuated to a lower volume level. The gamer then looks at the results of the game played, accumulates winnings as paid out coins,