

credits, or through other means, and initiates another play by pulling lever arm 104 and spinning the reels again.

[0013] As the reels spin again, various embodiments of the invention will ensure that the rhythm of the previous spin is maintained, through various means such as by playing a continuous looping audio track that is faded in and out or by restarting the audio track at a point calculated to maintain rhythm with the audio presented during a preceding reel spin. A continuous audio track is used in some embodiments, and is played continuously between reel spins. In certain games, the gaming system will be in a "play" mode in which the reels can be spun, and the audio track will be played continuously during the play mode. When the audio track reaches its end, some embodiments of the invention will further loop the track back to the beginning and play it over again, synchronized in rhythm with the previous playing of the track so that rhythm is maintained.

[0014] The continuously played track is in some embodiments of the invention faded in or brought to a louder volume level when the reels are spinning, and is faded out either completely or brought to a reduced volume level when the reels are not spinning. Bringing the volume level to a reduced level instead of fading it out completely will in some gaming systems provide even greater continuity to the gaming experience, and may be particularly useful where the played audio is consistent with a particular theme of the game that is to be maintained and reinforced through sound during game play.

[0015] Playing the reel spin track continuously to maintain rhythm is further combined in some embodiments of the invention with additional effects, such as equalization, echo, reverb, distortion, flanging, or other such effects to differentiate between states in which the reels are spinning and states in which the reels are not spinning. Such embodiments can provide a basis for further coordination of game sounds, such as bangup sounds presented in conjunction with credits being awarded that are played in rhythm to the reel spin audio. Some embodiments of the invention will use multiple effects, in varying or random combinations, to provide a varying audio presentation to the gamer to prevent fatigue from repetition of the same sounds. Similarly, the reel spin tracks themselves in some embodiments comprise multiple tracks, from which only selected tracks are faded in and out on each reel spin. For example, a first spin may result in a base track and a trumpet track being faded in, while a subsequent spin may result in the base track plus a saxophone being faded in.

[0016] Alternate embodiments of the invention will not play a track continuously, but will maintain rhythm between two or more reel spins by synchronizing rhythm of reel spins sound with the rhythm of sound played during a preceding reel spin. This can be achieved through a variety of methods, including synchronizing all reel spin sounds with a rhythmic background track, or by using the computer's clock or other timing means to play reel spin sound from a point in the sound or at a time that preserves rhythm with preceding reel spin sounds.

[0017] These examples show some of the many ways in which a computerized gaming system can incorporate audio having a continuous rhythm from reel spin to reel spin, thereby creating a less disjointed game presentation to the game player. The examples here seek to ensure that rhythm

is maintained between a reel spin associated sound and a preceding reel spin associated sound, creating a more continuous and attractive gaming experience. Although specific embodiments have been illustrated and described herein, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that any arrangement which is calculated to achieve the same purpose may be substituted for the specific embodiments shown. This application is intended to cover any adaptations or variations of the invention. It is intended that this invention be limited only by the claims, and the full scope of equivalents thereof.

1. A computerized gaming system, comprising:

a gaming module, comprising a processor and gaming code which is operable when executed on the processor to conduct a reel slot machine wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered; and

an audio module, the audio module operable to play an audio track during reel spins, the audio module further operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins.

2. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the audio module is operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins by playing a track continuously and by further fading in the track in conjunction with a spinning reel and by fading out the track in conjunction with a stopped reel.

3. The computerized gaming system of claim 2, wherein the audio module is further operable to loop play the continuous track such that rhythm of the track is maintained.

4. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the audio module is operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins by playing the track from a point calculated to maintain rhythm from a previous reel spin upon initiation of reel spin.

5. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the reels are video representations of reels on a video slot machine.

6. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the reels are mechanical reels under the control of the computerized gaming system.

7. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the audio module is operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins by playing a track continuously and by further fading in the track in conjunction with a spinning reel and by fading the track to a reduced volume in conjunction with a stopped reel.

8. The computerized gaming system of claim 1, wherein the audio module is further operable to play at least one additional audio track in rhythm with the audio track played during reel spin.

9. A method of operating a computerized gaming system, comprising:

playing an audio track during reel spins of a reel slot machine game via an audio module, the audio module further operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins, and wherein the reel slot machine game comprises a game upon which monetary value can be wagered.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the audio module is operable to maintain audio track rhythm over multiple reel spins by playing a track continuously and by further fading