user to see through these portions. Transparent portions may be selectively designed and timely activated according to game design, and changed according to game play. For example, if a game designer wants a person to focus on a bonus game on the front screen, they can use an intermediate light valve to black out a distal reel game.

[0080] In one embodiment, the layered display devices are all-digital and permit reconfiguration in real time. This permits new or different games to be downloaded onto a gaming machine, and reconfiguration of the three display devices to present a new or different game using any combination of the display devices. Game aspects changed in this manner may include: reel symbols, the paytable, the game theme, wager denominations, glass plate video data, reel strips, etc. For a casino, or other gaming establishment, this permits a single gaming machine to offer multiple games without the need for gaming machine maintenance or replacement when a new game is desired by casino management or customer demand. On one day, the gaming machine may offer games using all the layered display devices. The next day, the same gaming machine may offer a game that only uses an outer LCD panel and touchscreen, where a shutter (or other technology on front display) blocks out the back display devices. Some other subset of the layered displays may also be used. This permits dual-dynamic display device reconfiguration and/or game reconfiguration, at will, by downloading commands to the gaming machine that determine a) what game(s) is played, and b) what display device(s) is used. For example, this allows the same gaming machine to run a reel game one day and a video poker game another day that uses some subset of the display devices.

[0081] This reconfiguration of display devices used and games also enables new uses for gaming machines. Traditionally, a casino or other gaming establishment purchased a gaming machine and offered games only according to its display capabilities. If a casino purchased 250 gaming machines that only had LCD panels, and then later decided they wanted to implement reel games or other games that required more than an LCD panel, they were forced to purchase new gaming machines. Gaming machine **10**, however, solves this problem for a casino. Accordingly, gaming machines as described herein permit a gaming establishment to switch the number of display devices used by a gaming machine to display a game.

[0082] One business advantage of this dual-dynamic display device reconfiguration and/or game reconfiguration is navigating gaming regulations imposed by different jurisdictions, which often change over time. First, each jurisdiction imposes its own set of rules on what games are locally permissible. Second, gaming regulators in each jurisdiction often change the local rules. This is particularly common for new gaming regulators and jurisdictions allowing casinos for the first time. The new gaming regulators may only permit class 2 games at first (e.g., bingo) and later permit class 3 games (video poker and reel games, one year later). Gaming machine **10** allows a casino in this jurisdiction to adapt, instantly, to a regulations change with a) new games and b) new display device arrangements that were already on gaming machine **10** but not previously used. Thus, when some jurisdictions limit the number and types of games that can be played, gaming machines described herein allow a casino to switch games—on the fly without significant gaming machine maintenance or downtime in the casino—when jurisdiction rules change.

[0083] Additionally, the enhanced utility and regulatory acceptance of a viable stepper simulation using video in lieu of mechanical reels permits mechanical-simulated games in new environments. Some jurisdictions do not permit the use of actual mechanical reel machines but do allow all forms of video-based gaming machines, which permits embodiments described herein to service mechanical reel customers in these jurisdictions.

[0084] One of the display devices in a layered arrangement may also output live video such as television or a movie (or parts of either). For example, the television or movie video may be output on a rear display while a game is played on a proximate display. This permits a person to watch television or a movie while playing a game at a gaming machine, without changing position or line of sight to switch between the game and live video. The live video may also be related to the game being played to enhance enjoyment of that game, e.g., a science fiction movie related to a science fiction game being played or a 1960's television show related to a 1960's television game. The video may also play commercials for the gaming establishment, such as advertisements and infomercials for businesses related to a casino or businesses that pay for the advertising opportunity. Advertisements may include those for a local restaurant, local shows, —house offers and promotions currently offered, menus for food, etc.

[0085] Embodiments described herein may be implemented on a wide variety of gaming machines. Although illustrated with the use of gaming machines, this is not intended to be limiting as the embodiments discussed above may also be used in non-gaming, consumer goods such as televisions and the like. For example, the video reels may be output by a gaming machine as provided by IGT of Reno, Nev. Gaming machines from other manufacturers may also employ embodiments described herein. FIGS. **5**A and **5**B illustrate a sample gaming machine **10** in accordance with a specific embodiment. Gaming machine **10** is suitable for providing a game of chance and displaying video data that simulates a mechanical reel.

[0086] Gaming machine **10** includes a top box **11** and a main cabinet **12**, which defines an interior region of the gaming machine. The cabinet includes one or more rigid materials to separate the machine interior from the external environment, is adapted to house a plurality of gaming machine components within or about the machine interior, and generally forms the outer appearance of the gaming machine. Main cabinet **12** includes a main door **38** on the front of the machine, which opens to provide access to the interior of the machine. The interior may include any number of internal compartments, e.g., for cooling and security purposes. Attached to the main door or cabinet are typically one or more player-input switches or buttons **39**; one or more money or credit acceptors, such as a coin acceptor **42**, and a bill or ticket scanner **23**; a coin tray **24**; and a belly glass **25**. Viewable through main door **38** is the exterior display monitor **18***a* and one or more information panels **27**.

[0087] Top box **11**, which typically rests atop of the main cabinet **12**, may also contain a ticket printer **28**, a keypad **29**, one or more additional displays **30**, a card reader **31**, one or more speakers **32**, a top glass **33** and a camera **34**. Other components and combinations are also possible, as is the ability of the top box to contain one or more items traditionally reserved for main cabinet locations, and vice versa.

[0088] It will be readily understood that gaming machine **10** can be adapted for presenting and playing any of a number