

[0022] a shutter mechanism underlying the monitor, the shutter mechanism being controllable to vary between a transparent state, in which other images underlying the shutter mechanism, in use, are visible through the monitor, and an at least partially transparent state in which the other images are at least partially occluded when viewed through the monitor.

[0023] The display means may be a multi-layered structure having a user-interface layer overlying the monitor. The multi-layered structure may include an illuminating layer operatively arranged relative to the monitor to illuminate the monitor.

[0024] According to a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of displaying images on a gaming machine, the method including the steps of:

[0025] displaying a first set of images on a game playing arrangement mounted in a cabinet of the gaming machine; and

[0026] displaying at least one further image on a display means overlying the game playing arrangement.

[0027] Preferably, the method includes controlling a state of the display means to control its transparency to regulate a degree of visibility, if any, of the game playing arrangement through the display means.

[0028] In addition, the method may include displaying at least one further image overlying an image of the game playing arrangement, said at least one further image being taken into account in determining an outcome of a game played on the gaming machine.

[0029] To enhance the appearance of the images, the method may include illuminating the display means to enhance the display of said at least one further image on the display means.

[0030] The method may include displaying the at least one further image on the display means as a moving animation. In addition, the method may include controlling the display of the at least one further image on the display means to provide an effective change in camera angle or a zooming in or out effect.

[0031] The invention extends also to a gaming machine which includes a gaming machine display, as described above.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0032] The invention is now described by way of example with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings in which:—

[0033] FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of a gaming machine, in accordance with the invention;

[0034] FIG. 2 shows a block diagram of a control circuit of the gaming machine;

[0035] FIGS. 3 to 5 show three-dimensional views of part of the gaming machine with an animated image on a display means of a display of the gaming machine;

[0036] FIG. 6 shows a schematic representation of a first example of a screen display of the gaming machine;

[0037] FIG. 7 shows a schematic representation of a second example of a screen display of the gaming machine;

[0038] FIG. 8 shows a three dimensional, exploded view of a gaming machine display in accordance with another embodiment of the invention; and

[0039] FIG. 9 shows a flow chart of a game played on the gaming machine of FIG. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0040] In FIG. 1, reference numeral 10 generally designates a gaming machine including a display 14, in accordance with the invention. The machine 10 includes a cabinet 12 housing the display 14.

[0041] The display 14 includes a game playing arrangement, or symbol carrying arrangement, 16 in the form of a plurality of mechanical reels 18 with each reel 18 carrying a plurality of symbols on an outer periphery of the reel 18. The reels 18 are used to play a spinning reel game.

[0042] A midtrim 20 of the machine 10 houses a bank 22 of buttons for enabling a player to play the game. The midtrim 20 also houses a credit input mechanism 24 (FIG. 2).

[0043] The machine 10 includes a top box 26 on which artwork 28 is carried. The artwork 28 includes paytables, details of bonus awards, etc.

[0044] A coin tray 30 is mounted beneath the cabinet 12 for cash payouts from the machine 10.

[0045] Referring to FIG. 2 of the drawings, a control means or control circuit 40 is illustrated. A program which implements the game and user interface is run on a processor 42 of the control circuit 40. The processor 42 forms part of a controller 44 which drives the reels 18 of the symbol carrying arrangement 16 and which receives input signals from sensors 46 associated with the bank 22 of buttons and sensors 46 associated with a touchscreen of the display 14.

[0046] The controller 36 also receives input pulses from the credit input mechanism 24 to determine whether or not a player has provided sufficient credit to commence playing.

[0047] Finally, the controller 42 drives a payout mechanism 48 which, for example, may be a coin hopper for feeding coins to the coin tray 30 to make a pay out to a player when the player wishes to redeem his or her credit.

[0048] The display 14 includes a second display means in the form of a flat panel, liquid crystal display (LCD) 50 mounted operatively in front of the symbol carrying arrangement 16 so that the symbol carrying arrangement 16 is visible through the LCD 50.

[0049] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 3 to 5 of the drawings, the LCD 50 is an at least partially transparent display and carries at least one image 52 under certain circumstances thereon. In particular, the image 52 is related to the underlying spinning reel game played on the symbol carrying arrangement 16.

[0050] As indicated above, the LCD 50 is at least partially transparent so that images or symbols carried on the reels 18 of the symbol carrying arrangement 16 are visible through the LCD 50.