

paylines are randomly generated in accordance with the resulting symbols presented in the display grid **1000**.

[**0078**] A number of particular resulting adjacent symbols required to provide a payout may be determined in advance. For example, it may be determined in advance that a minimum of "x" adjacent star symbols results in a winning payout. In one embodiment, an increasing payout is provided for each additional adjacent symbol exceeding the minimum to provide a payout. For instance, it may be determined that five adjacent star symbols provides a payout of ten times the wager placed, and each additional adjacent star symbol doubles the payout value (e.g., six adjacent star symbols provides a payout of twenty times the wager placed, seven adjacent star symbols provides a payout of forty times the wager placed, etc.). Any predetermined payout schedule may be provided in connection with the invention.

[**0079**] Further, different symbols may require different numbers of adjacent matching symbols to provide a winning payout combination. For example, it may require a minimum of five of a first symbol to provide a winning payout, but may only require three of a second symbol to provide a winning payout. Some symbols may provide no payout, regardless of the consecutive number of adjacent matching symbols. These scenarios may be determined in advance.

[**0080**] In another embodiment, the gaming participant selects one or more symbols that will be played. In such an embodiment, the participant is afforded an opportunity to select which one or more symbols to play, in the hopes that a predetermined number of adjacent ones of the selected symbols will result. This selection may be accomplished via a user interface. One particular embodiment includes requiring increasing wager amounts for each symbol selected. For example, a first wager amount may be required if the user selects only one symbol, and an increased wager may be required for increased numbers of selected symbols.

[**0081**] **FIG. 11** illustrates another embodiment of the dynamic generation of paylines in connection with the multi-symbol grid **1100** in accordance with the invention. In the illustrated embodiment, some of the display segments present a reduced number of display subsegments, such as to one display subsegment corresponding to the display segment. Display segments **1104**, **1112**, and **1114** illustrate examples where a single symbol is presented in the display segment, rather than the four display subsegments presented in each of the other display segments. Paylines can be dynamically generated in a manner similar to that described in connection with **FIG. 10**.

[**0082**] More particularly, the single star symbol presented in display segment **1104** is shown to be adjacent to the star symbols in display subsegments **1102** and **1106**. Display subsegment **1106** is in turn adjacent to display subsegment **1108**, which is in turn adjacent to display subsegment **1110**. This results in a five-symbol dynamically-generated payline. The result would be the same had the star symbol been presented in display subsegment **1116** rather than display subsegment **1102**, since display subsegment **1116** is still adjacent to display segment **1104**.

[**0083**] **FIG. 12** illustrates another embodiment of the dynamic generation of paylines in connection with the grid **1200** in accordance with the invention. In the illustrated embodiment, all of the display segments present a reduced

number of display subsegments, which in this example is one display subsegment per display segment. This also corresponds to a standard slot game grid, which does not utilize multiple symbols per display segment. In either case, the dynamic payline generation in accordance with the invention may be utilized.

[**0084**] Any adjacent symbols presented in the grid **1200** may result in a dynamically-generated payline, assuming that the requisite number of a predetermined symbol has been presented. For example, assuming that three or more star symbols results in a winning symbol combination, the three adjacent star symbols at display segments **1202**, **1204**, and **1206** results in a winning symbol combination. These three display segment are not designated in advance as a payline, but rather the payline results from the requisite number of adjacent star symbols.

[**0085**] The resulting paylines may be in any pattern or configuration, as long as the matching symbols are adjacent as defined for the particular slot game. For example, referring to **FIG. 13**, each display subsegment again corresponds to a display segment, but the resulting paylines are not straight-line paylines as was described in connection with **FIG. 12**. In the example grid **1300** depicted in **FIG. 13**, two winning symbol combinations result from dynamically-generated generated paylines. A first dynamic payline includes adjacent star symbols at display segments **1300**, **1302**, and **1304**. A second dynamic payline includes adjacent sun symbols at display segments **1306**, **1308**, **1310**, and **1312**. As can be seen, any adjacent matching symbols may generate a winning symbol combination on a dynamically-generated payline, if that winning symbol combination meets the predefined requisites of symbol type and number of symbols.

[**0086**] In order to place wagers in connection with the dynamic payline aspect of the invention, a participant can wager on a symbol or a group of symbols. For example, the user may wager that a winning symbol combination will result for the star symbol, and the user may therefore place the wager on the star symbol. The participant may make wagers on additional symbols as well, thereby increasing the chances for a dynamic payline of the selected symbols to be generated. Alternatively, where the dynamic generation of paylines is employed as a secondary or bonus gaming activity, the participant may not be required to make an independent wager on the outcome. For example, the dynamic payline generation mode may be activated as a bonus event, in which case no additional wagers need to be placed, and any predetermined symbol combination occurring on a dynamically-generated payline may be considered as a winning symbol combination.

[**0087**] **FIG. 14** is an embodiment of a casino-style gaming device in which the principles of the present invention may be applied. The slot machine **1400** is a structure including at least a computing system, a housing, and a display. The housing includes a base **1402** and a display device **1404** to allow the slot machine **1400** to be a self-supported, independent structure. The base **1402** includes structure supporting the slot machine **1400**, and also includes a user interface **1406** to allow the user to control and engage in play of the slot machine **1400**. The particular user interface mechanisms associated with user interface **1406** is dependent on the type of gaming machine. For example, the user interface **1406**