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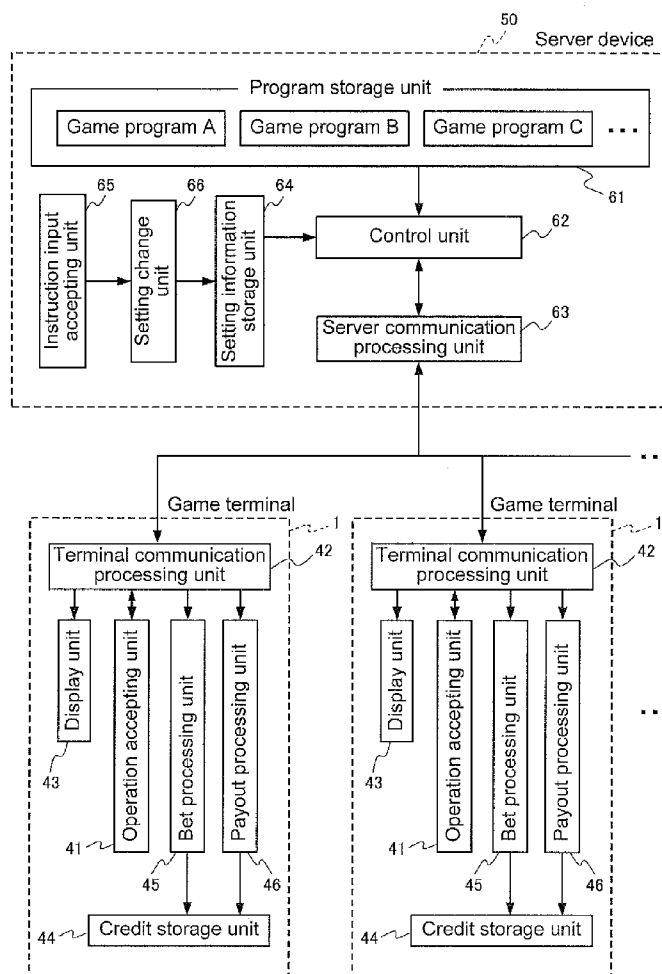
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**Aida**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2007/0218999 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Sep. 20, 2007**(54) **GAME SYSTEM****Publication Classification**(75) Inventor: **Eiji Aida**, Zama city (JP)(51) **Int. Cl.**  
**A63F 9/24** (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **463/42**(57) **ABSTRACT**

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Mar. 16, 2006 (JP) ..... 2006-072106

A configuration is disclosed in which processes and controls can be carried out that differ with respect to a plurality of game terminals connected to a server device. When, during execution of a game program specified by a game selection operation, information indicating that an event prize has been won is received in a server communication processing unit from a game terminal, a control unit of a server device will read from a setting information unit action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal that was the transmission source for the game selection operation information. In accordance with the action-setting information that was read, either a jackpot game or a free game will progress. More specifically, game rules for whether a jackpot game or free game will progress when an event prize is won in a slot game can be made to differ on an individual each game terminal basis.



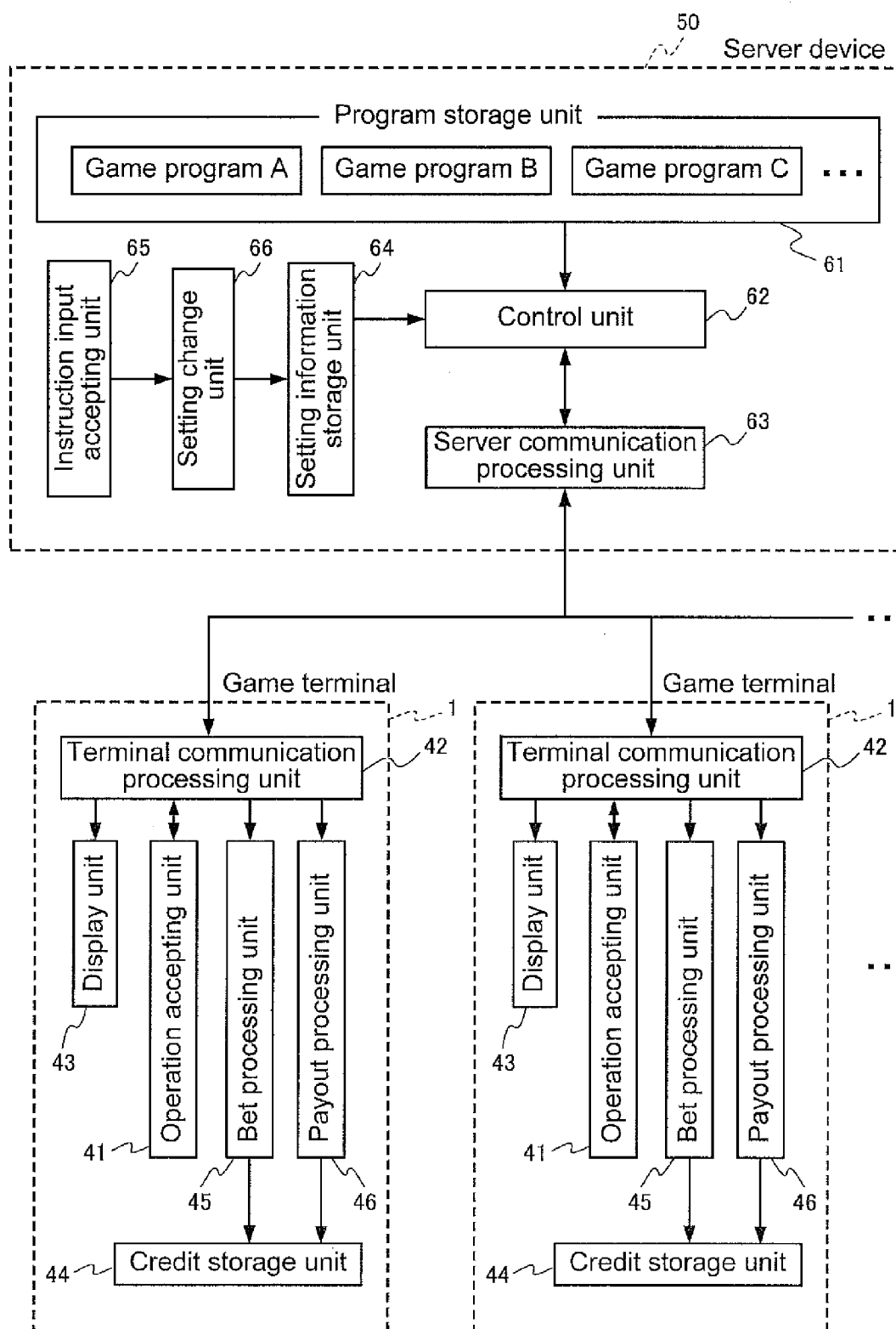
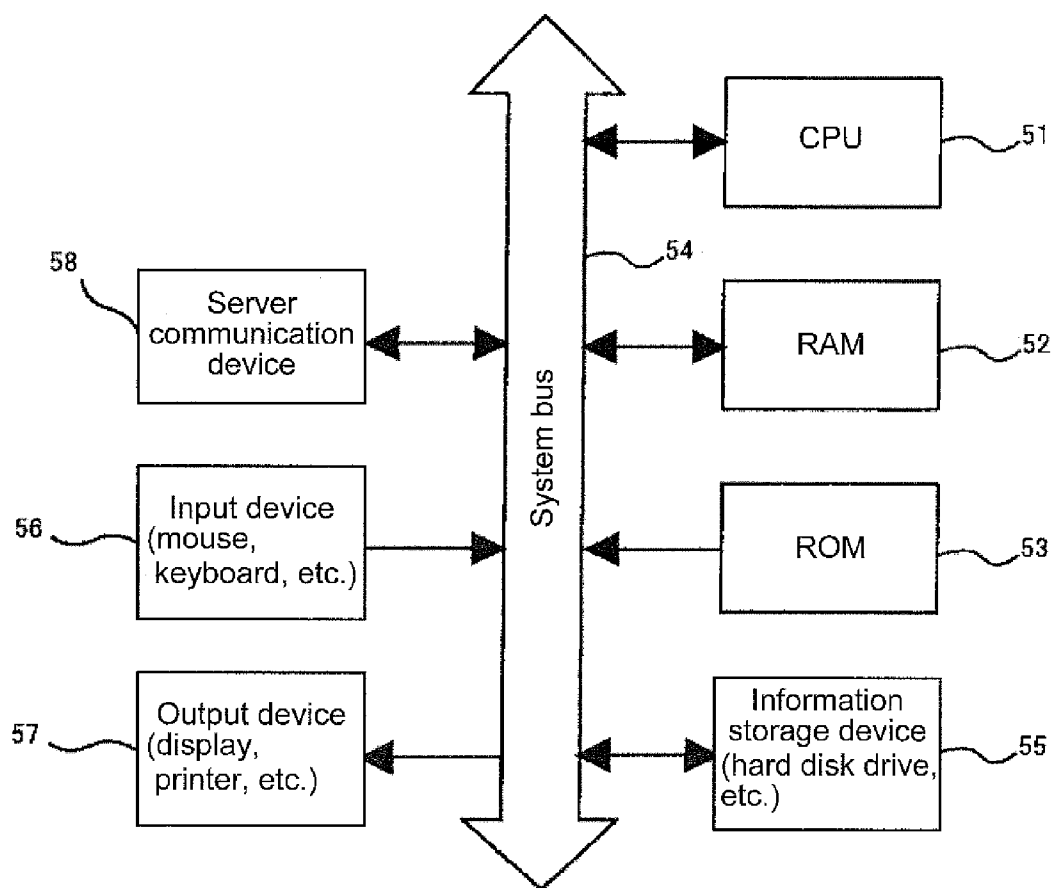


Fig. 1

*Fig. 2*

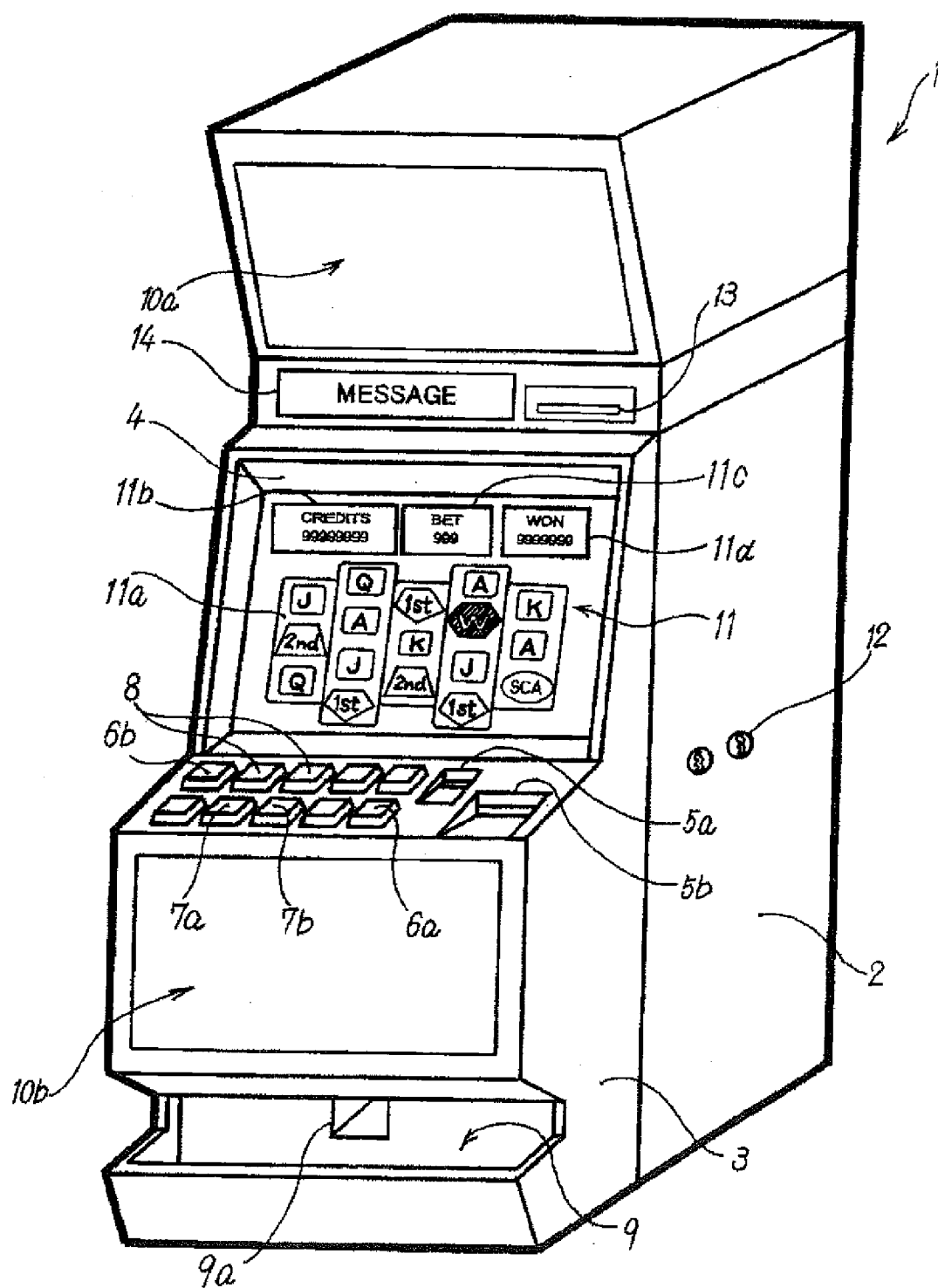
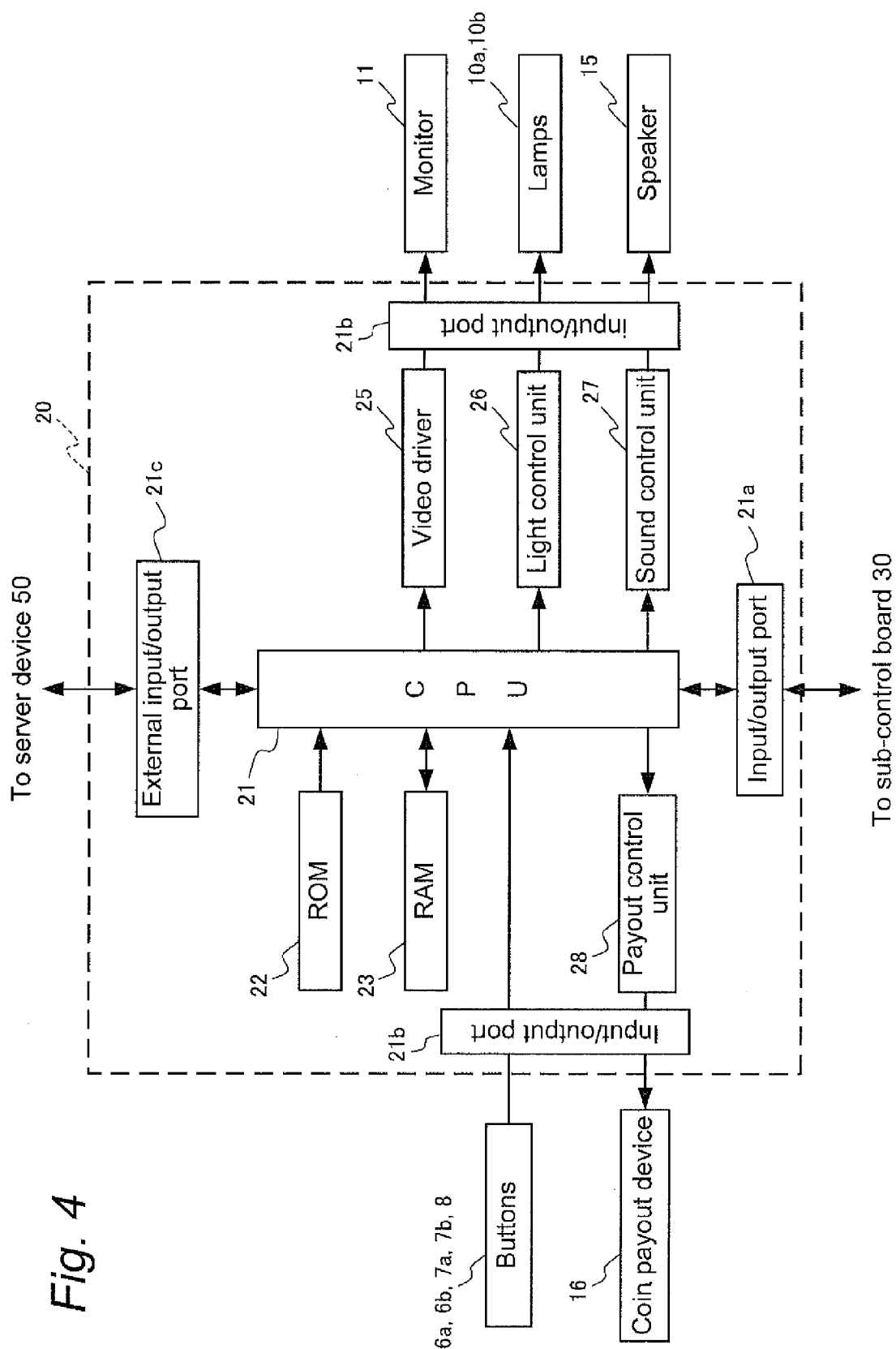


Fig. 3



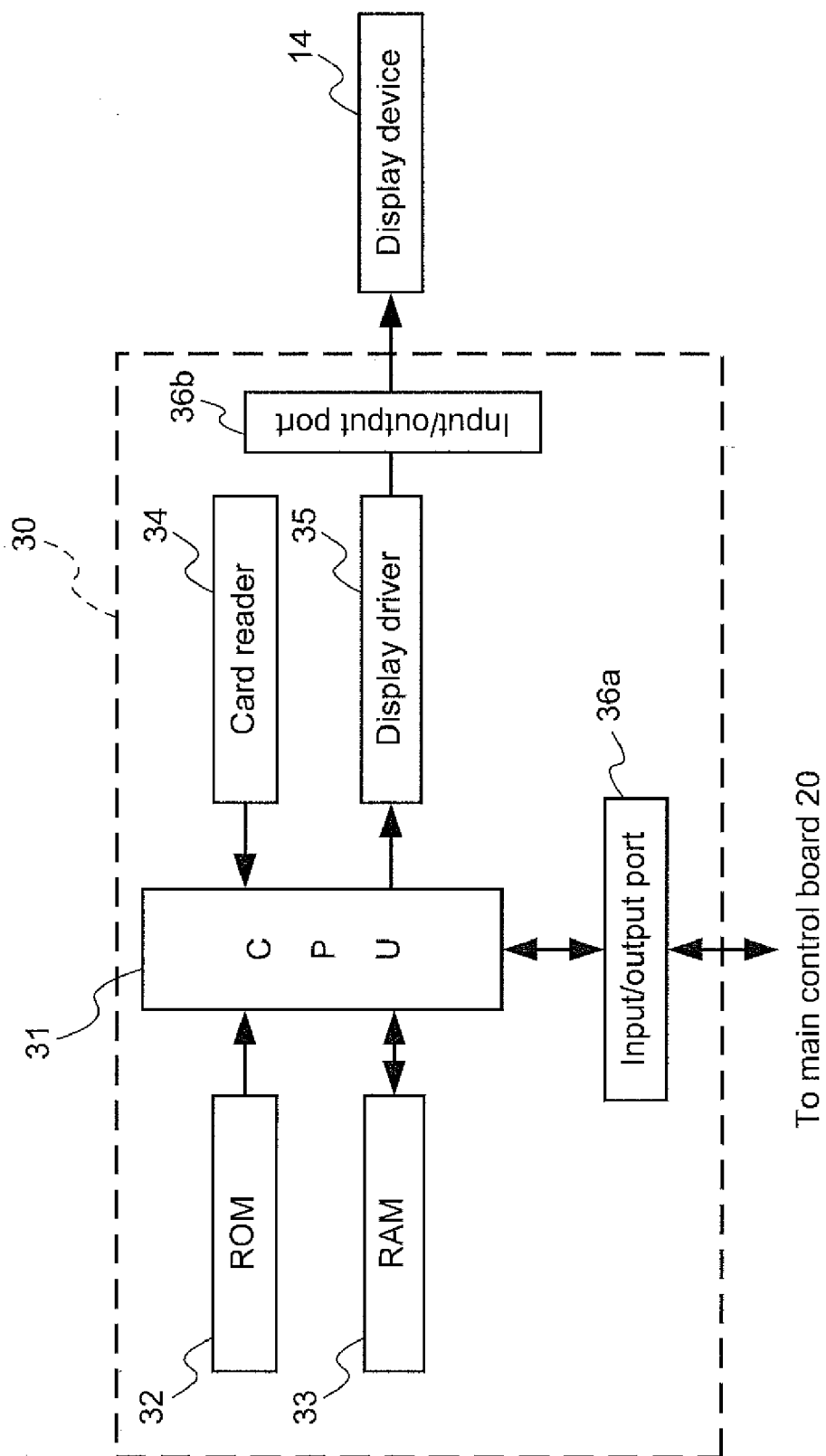


Fig. 5

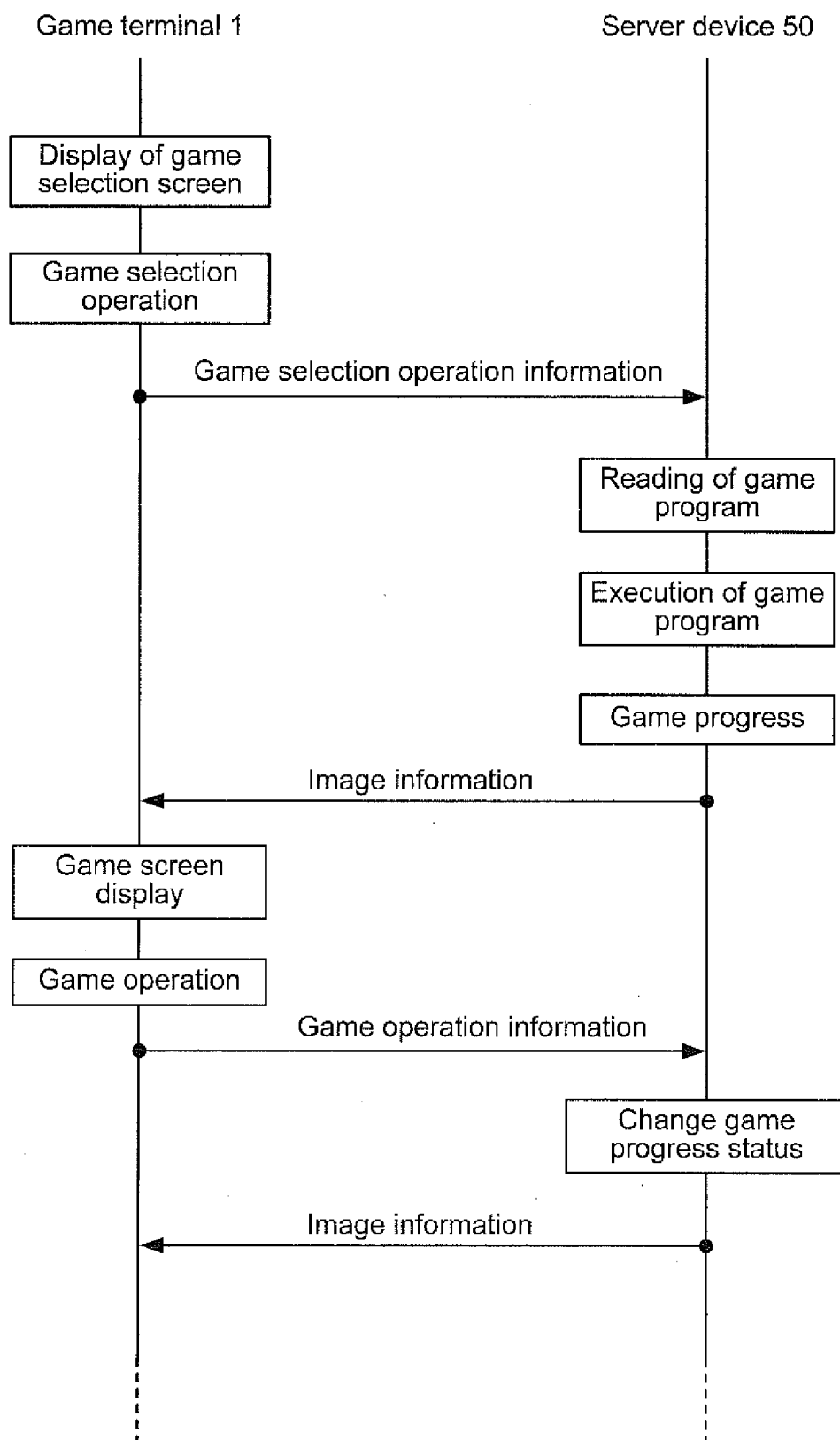
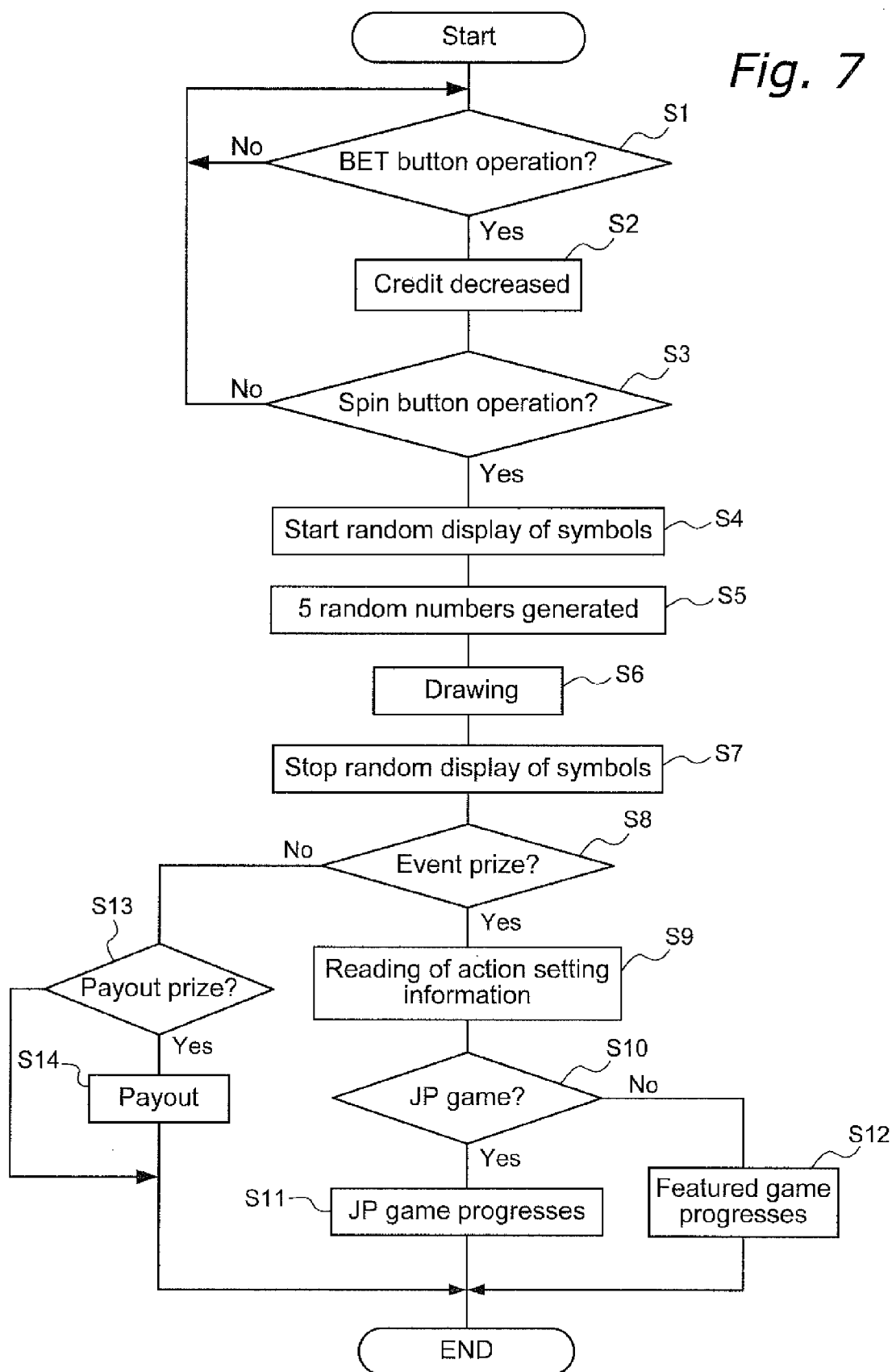
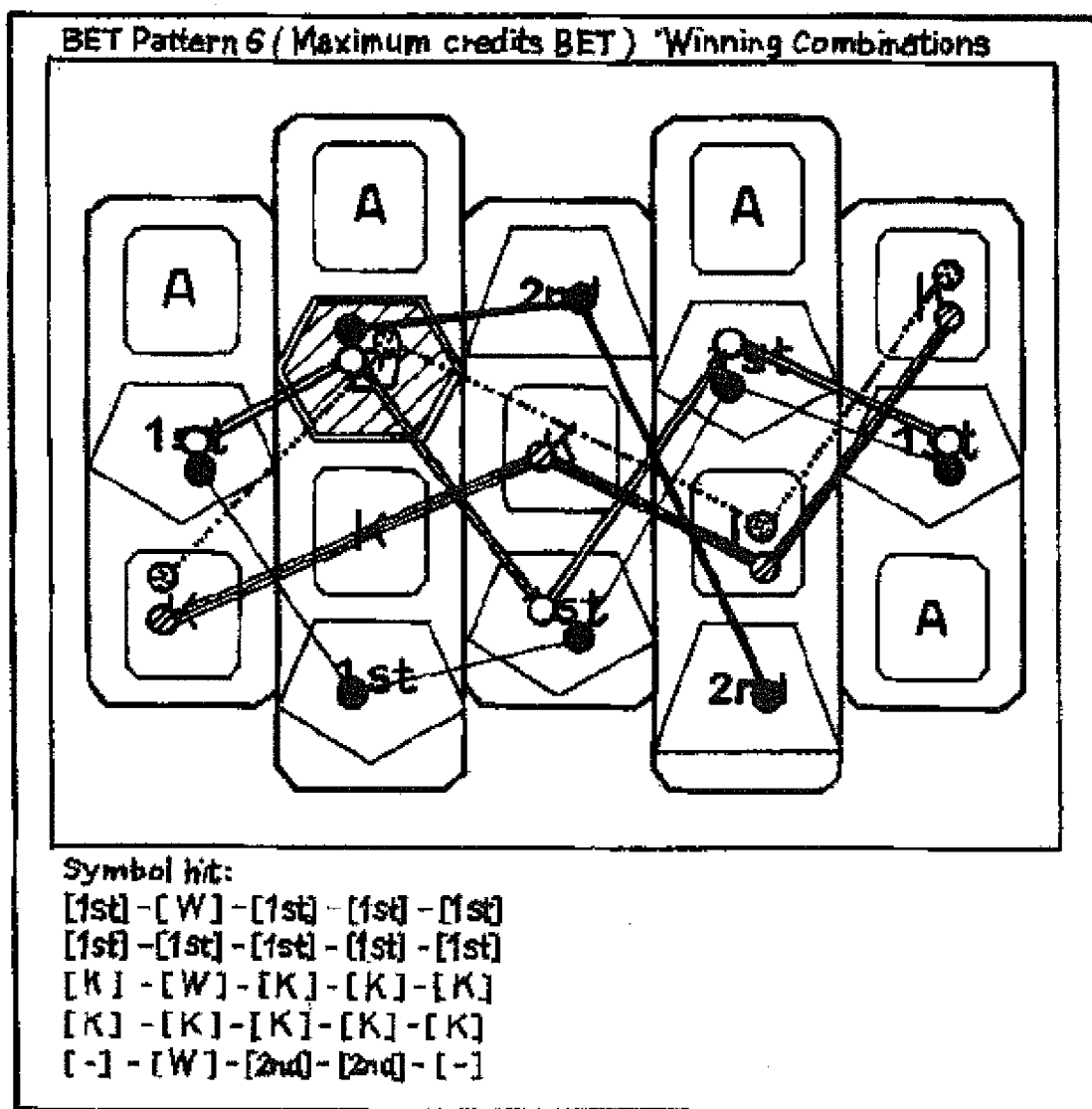


Fig. 6

Fig. 7







*Fig. 8*

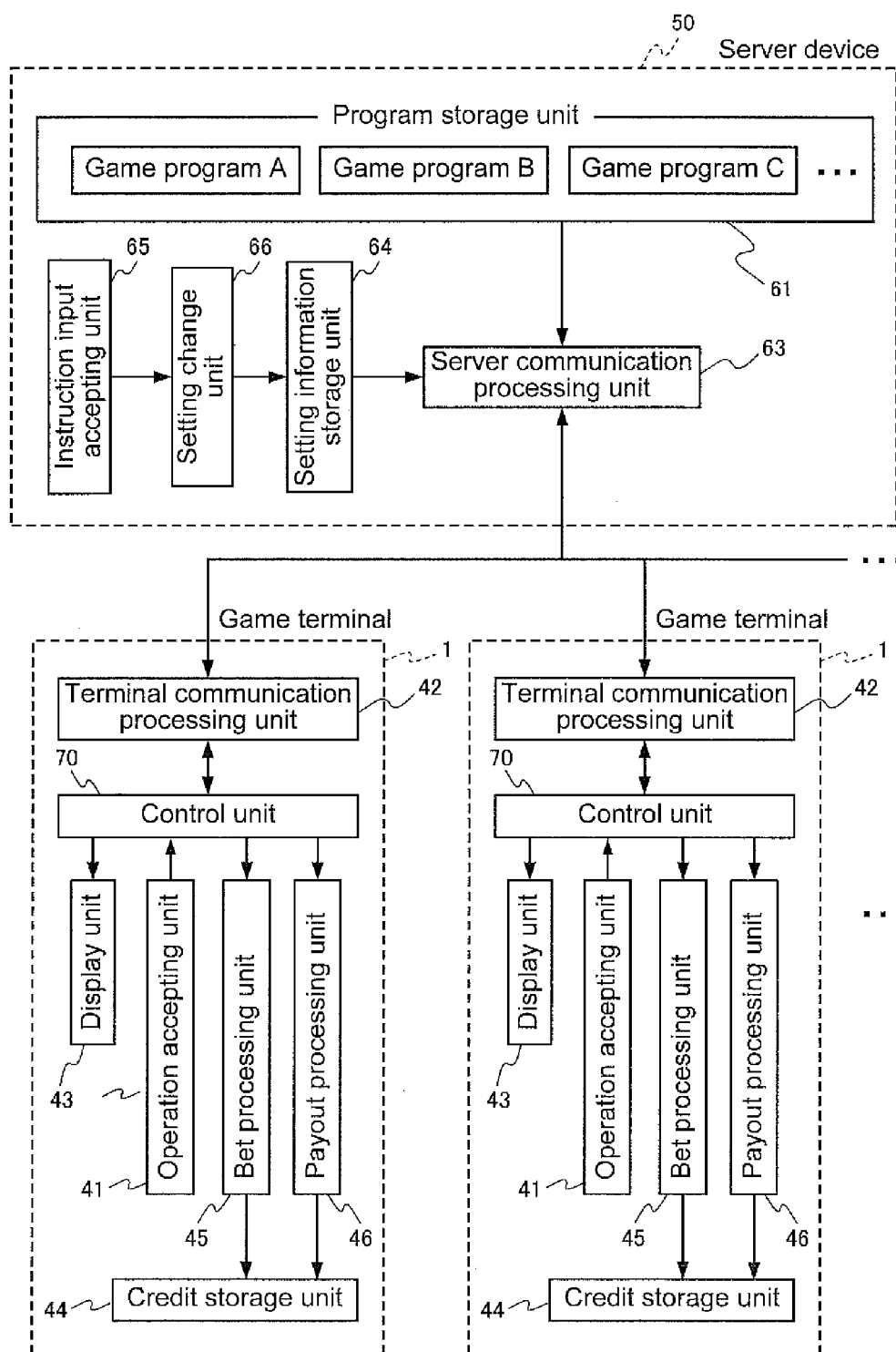


Fig. 9

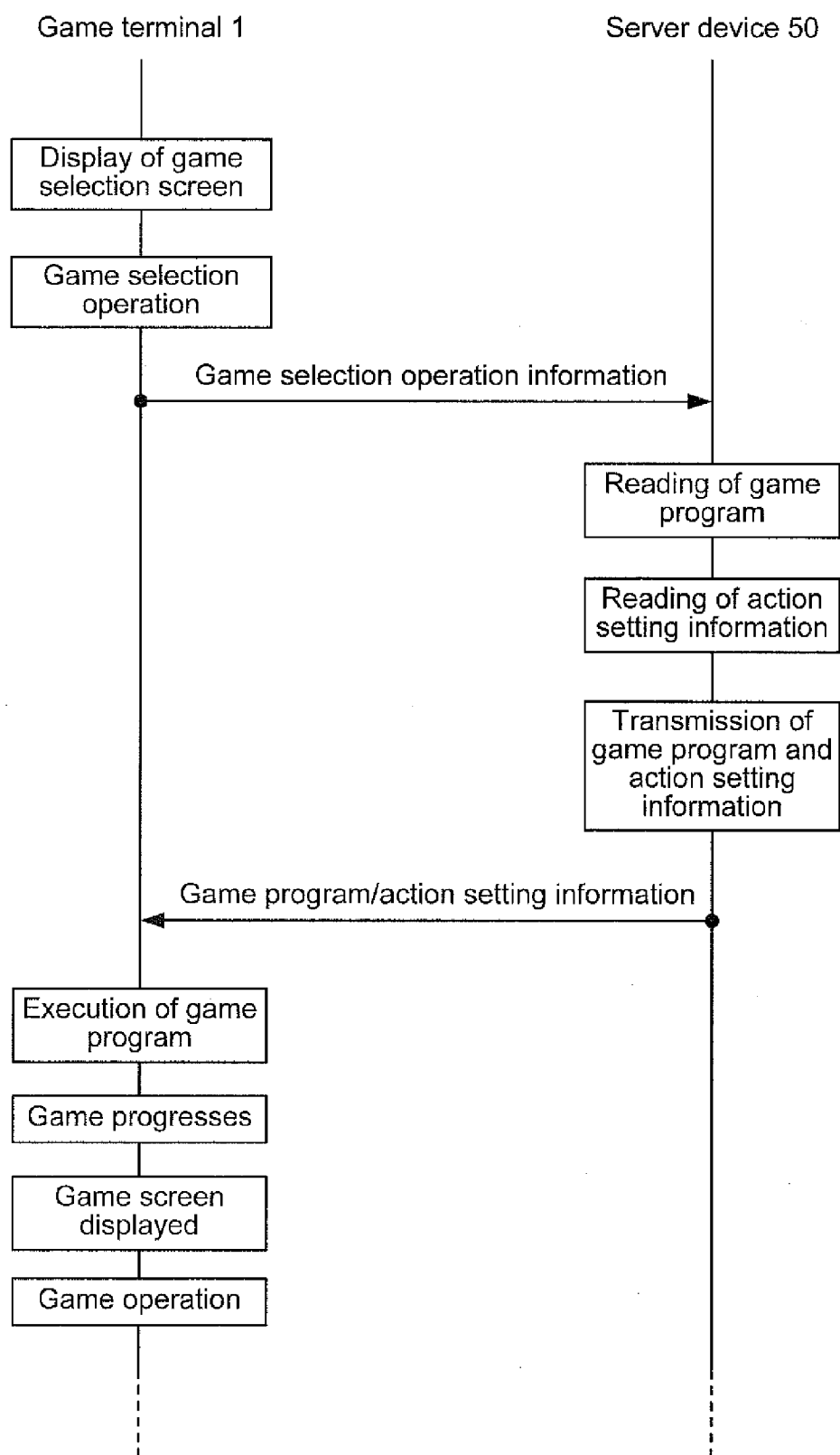


Fig. 10

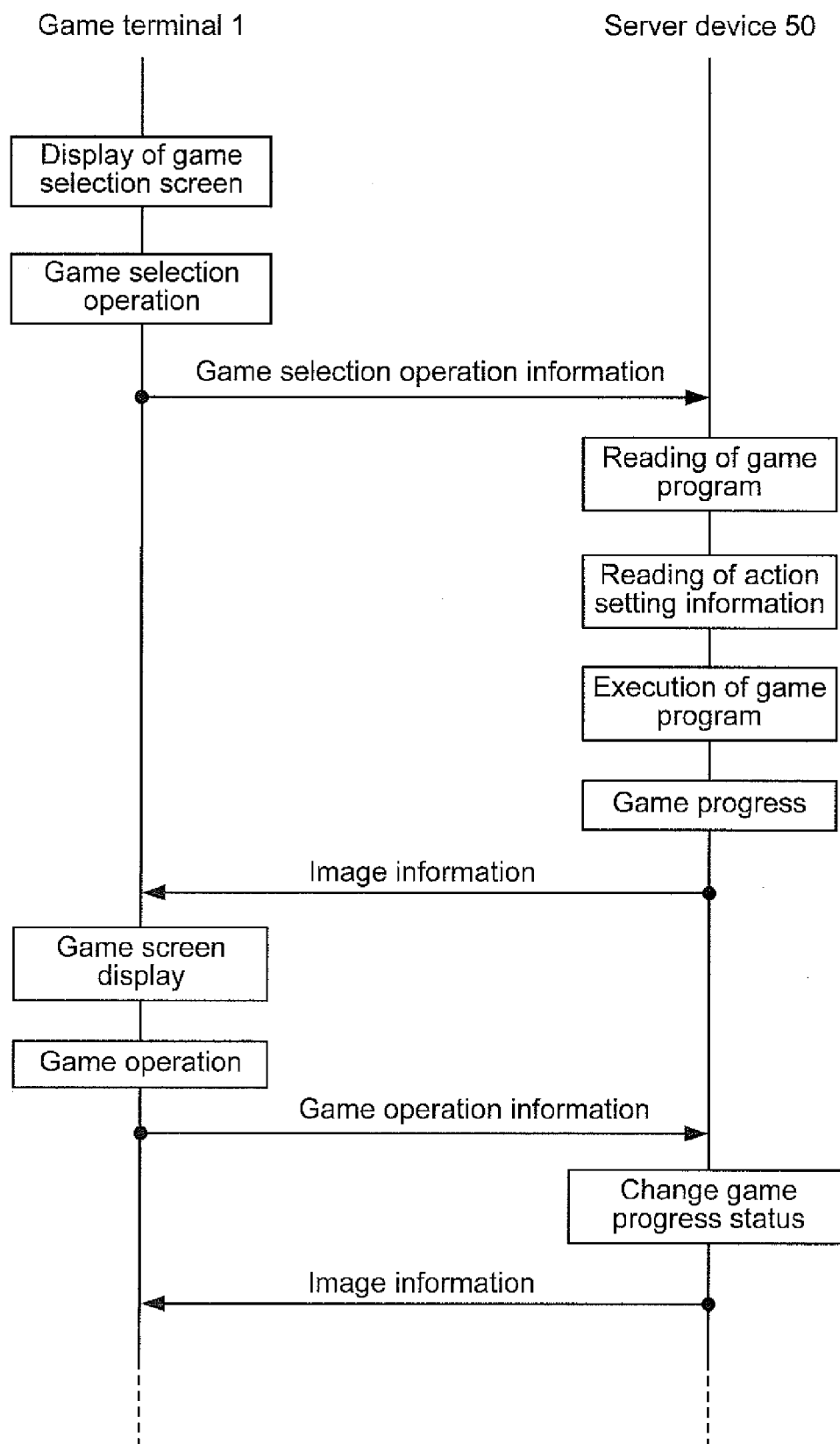


Fig. 11

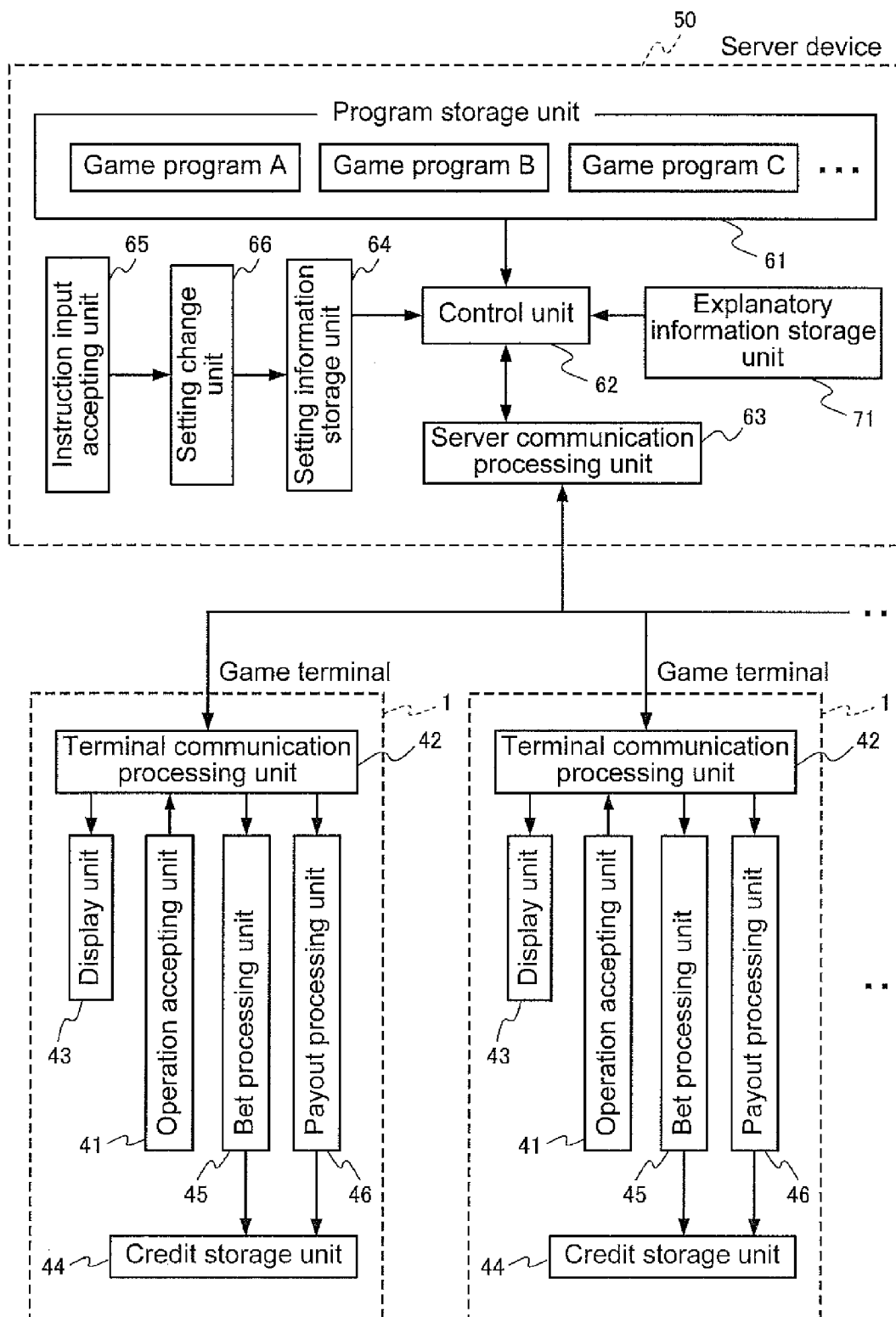


Fig. 12

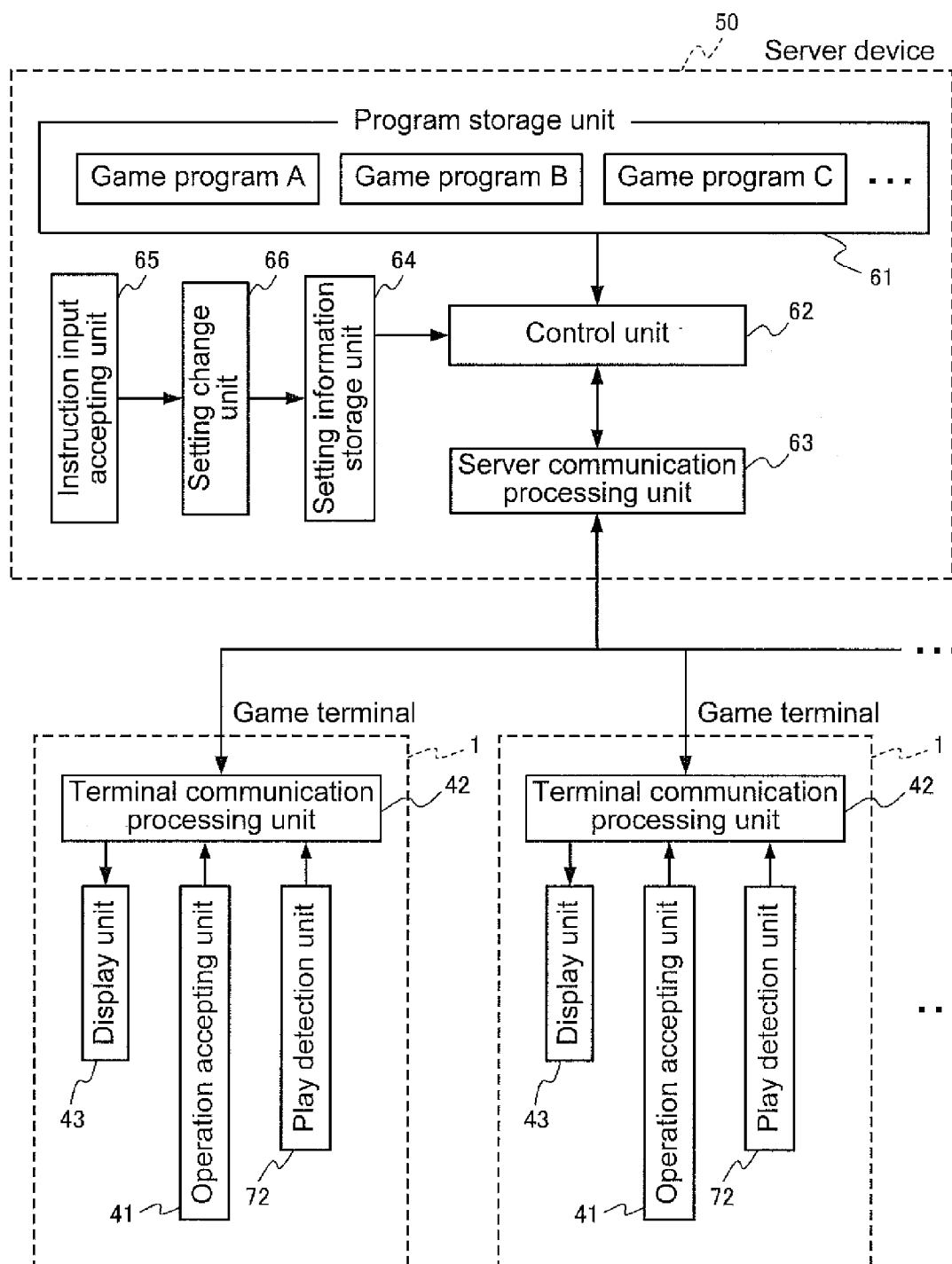


Fig. 13

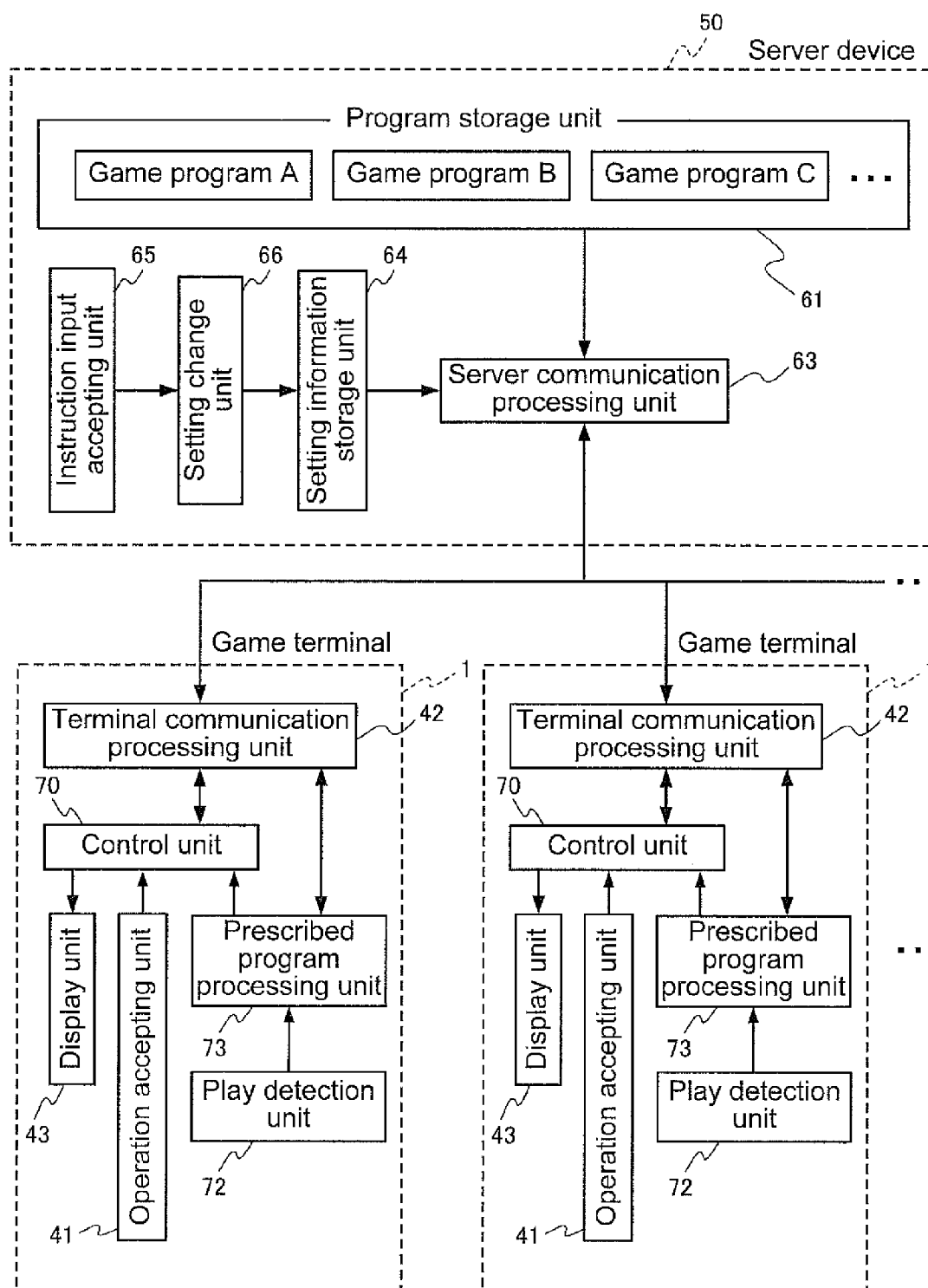


Fig. 14

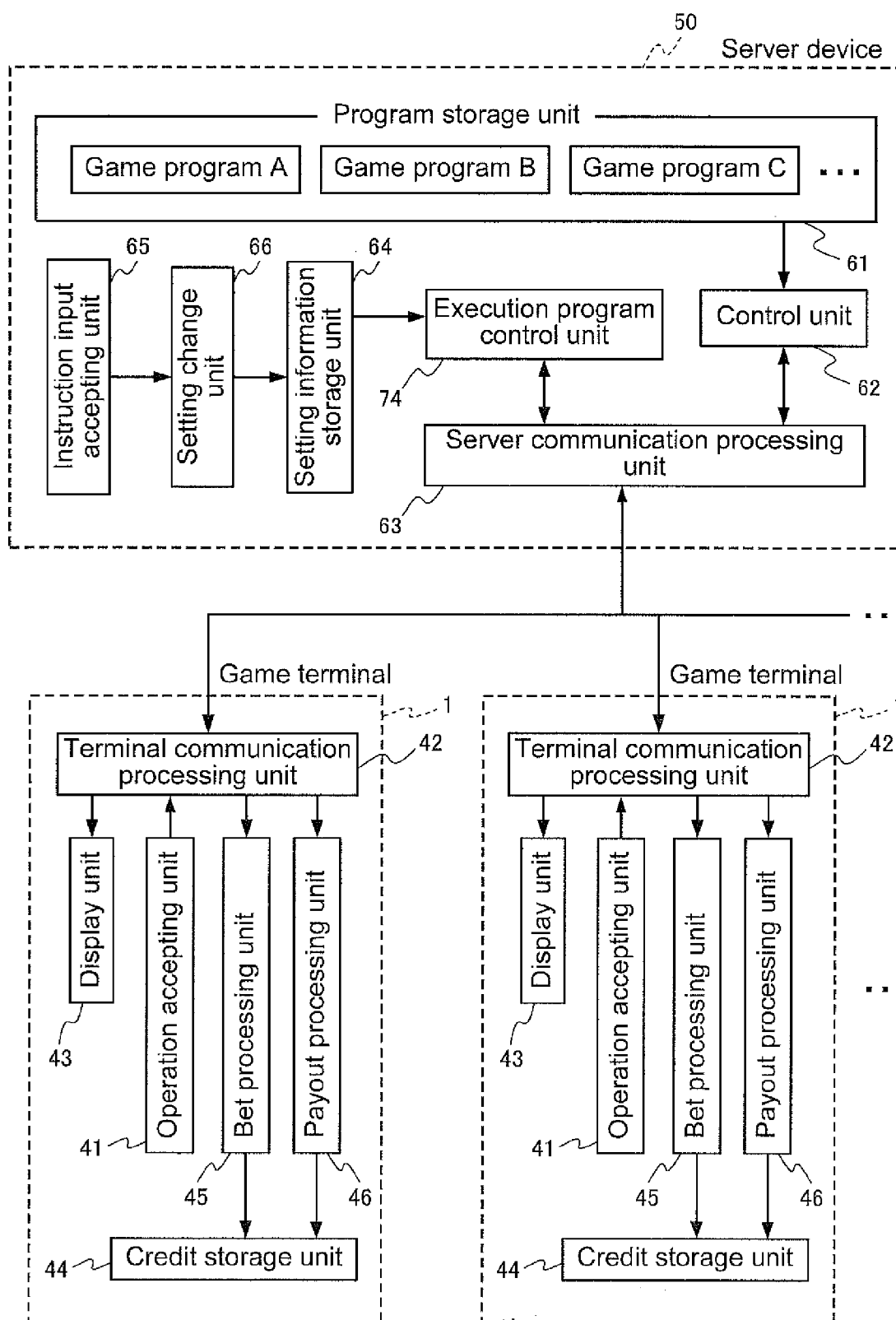


Fig. 15



## GAME SYSTEM

### CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to Japanese Patent Application No. 2006-072106. The entire disclosure of Japanese Patent Application No. 2006-072106 is hereby incorporated herein by reference.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a game system to be installed in a casino or similar facility and a server device that can be used in such system.

[0004] 2. Background Information

[0005] A known example of this type of game system is the system described in the specification of U.S. Pat. No. 6,409,602. This system comprises a server and a plurality of clients, and the server can execute a plurality of game programs. Each client can access a plurality of game programs to be executed by the server, and a game screen formed by an accessed game program is displayed on a display unit of the relevant client. A player can play the game program being executed by the server by performing game operations at the client. In this kind of game system, a player performs game selection operations using a client operation unit to select the game the player wants to play. In this way, when the game program selected in the game selection operation is executed by the server, the game progresses on the client, and the player can play the game.

[0006] However, with this kind of game system, various processing or controls that the server executes at each game terminal are the same for every game terminal. Therefore, the server cannot perform individualized processing or controls for each game terminal or cause game terminals to perform individualized processing or control. Consequently, a problem arises in which a manager or operator of this game system cannot manage, on an individual game terminal basis, the various processing and various controls that the server performs for the game terminals. This problem may hinder the smooth or appropriate management and operation of the game system. Further, from the perspective of the player, there is a problem in which because game play is the same on all game terminals, the player is denied the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

[0007] Besides the game system described in the specification of U.S. Pat. No. 6,409,602, another example of a game system is a download-type game system. In download-type game systems, a plurality of game programs is stored on a server, and the game program that a player selects at a client is downloaded from the server, and the game program is executed at the client. With these game systems as well, a problem arises in which unless the various processing or various controls that each game terminal performs for any game terminal are the same, a manager or operator of the game system cannot manage on an individual game terminal basis the various processing or various controls that each game terminal performs. This problem may also hinder smooth or appropriate management or operation of the game system. Further, from the perspective of the player, the player is denied the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

[0008] In view of the above, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure that there exists a need for an improved game system for performing appropriate management or operation of each game terminal on an individual game terminal basis. This invention addresses this need in the art as well as other needs, which will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] A first aspect of the invention provides a game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication.

[0010] Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player; a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation, and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received.

[0011] The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information.

[0012] In the first aspect, before or during execution of the game program, the control unit reads, from the setting information storage unit, the action-setting information based on the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal, and executes the game program according to the action-setting information that was read. In addition, the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game program and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

[0013] This game system (hereinafter "thin-client type game system") enables games based on game programs executed by a server device to be played on game terminals.

[0014] In this game system, action-setting information for each game terminal is stored in the setting information storage unit of the server device associated with the respec-

tive terminal-specifying information. When the server communication processing unit receives game selection operation information, the control unit of the server device reads from the setting information storage unit action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information of the game terminal that transmitted the game selection operation information. Further, the control unit acts in accordance with the read action-setting information before or during execution of the game program specified by the game selection operation information. In this way, the actions of the control unit of the server device before or during execution of the game program on any game terminal are performed in accordance with action-setting information for each game terminal. Therefore, it is possible to have the control unit of the server device control the various processing and various controls related to game progress on each terminal in an individualized manner for each game terminal.

**[0015]** Further, in accordance with this game system, action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit can be changed in accordance with inputted change instructions that the instruction input accepting unit has accepted. Thus, a manager or operator of this game system can input change instructions to the instruction input accepting unit and change the action-setting information relating to game progress for each terminal as appropriate. It is thereby possible to change, on an individual game terminal basis, what processing or control the control unit of the server device will perform when a game is progressing.

**[0016]** Even though action-setting information is changed on an individual game terminal basis, the system may be configured so that a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals are formed, and action-setting information is changed in units of groups. In such a case, the same action-setting information may be associated with two or more game terminals belonging to the same group. As a result, while the various processing and controls relating to game progress carried out by the control unit of a server device with respect to two or more game terminals belonging to the same group may change uniformly, the various processing and controls will differ from group to group.

**[0017]** According to a second aspect of the present invention, in the first aspect, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating a rule for a game to progress on the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0018]** In this game system, game rules can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis. A manager or operator of the present game system can change the rules on an individual game terminal basis by inputting change instructions into the instruction input accepting unit. The kinds of rules to be made to differ can be appropriately decided from a variety of perspectives, such as achieving smooth or suitable management or operation of the game system or making the game more enjoyable for a player. How to change the rules on an individual game terminal basis can be decided appropriately by a manager or operator of the game system. Change instructions can be input into the instruction input accepting unit to change rule information on an individual game terminal basis in accordance with such decision. The kinds of rule to be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis and the details of such change may be applied uniformly regardless of type of game or may be applied just to a specific game type.

**[0019]** Further, with this game system, because game rules can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis, depending on which game terminal a player plays on, he/she can play games with different rules. Consequently, the player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

**[0020]** According to a third aspect of the present invention, in the first aspect, the at least one program is a program that runs a game that commences on the condition that a bet of at least a prescribed amount is accepted from a player, and the payout amount is determined according to the amount of the accepted bet. In addition, each game terminal further comprises a bet processing unit configured such that, when the operation accepting unit accepts bet operations from a player; bet processing for accepting a bet amount corresponding to such bet operations is performed thereby; and a payout processing unit configured to perform payout in accordance with the game results of the player;

**[0021]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information contains information on a prescribed bet amount set so as to differ for each game terminal as specified by terminal-specifying information. In addition, a game rule contained in the action-setting information is a rule to commence a game when the prescribed bet amount, which is different for each game terminal, is accepted from a player.

**[0022]** In this game system, the prescribed bet amount that is a condition to commence a game to be played on a game terminal is different from game terminal to game terminal. Therefore, in this game system, the bet amount that a player must pay to play a game can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis. Generally, a game terminal with a low prescribed bet amount as a condition to commence a game will be favored by players who bet small amounts and are not aiming for a single large payout. On the other hand, a game terminal with a high prescribed bet amount as a condition to commence a game will be favored by players who bet large amounts and are aiming for a single large payout. Therefore, for example, by changing the rules so that the prescribed bet amount that is a condition for commencing a game is increased only for one or more game terminals installed in a specified area in a facility, such facility can be operated so that such specified area is a space for big bettors. Such operation can also be performed with conventional general casino game systems; conventionally, to move such a specified area to another location, it was necessary to actually move the game devices installed in such specified area themselves to such other location. In contrast, with this game system, if a manager or an operator of the game system inputs change instructions into the instruction input accepting unit so that prescribed bet amounts are increased or decreased according to area, such specified area can be easily moved to another location. Thus, in accordance with the game system of the present invention, it is possible to move such a specified area to another location or otherwise change the terminal layout quickly and easily, enabling smooth and suitable operation and management of the game system.

**[0023]** According to a fourth aspect of the present invention, in the first aspect, each game terminal further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in game images in a plurality of different languages; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying informa-

tion includes information that indicates the language of the explanatory information to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0024]** In this game system, the type of action-setting information that differs on an individual game terminal basis is information indicating the language of the explanatory information contained in game images. Thus, with this game system, the language of the explanatory information contained in game images can be changed on an individual game terminal basis. With this game system, a manager or operator of the game system can change the language in which the explanatory information is displayed on game terminals installed in any area by inputting a change instruction into the instruction input accepting unit. This enables operations in accordance with the patrons who use the facility, such that the number of game terminals displaying explanatory information in a language used by many patrons at the facility can be increased. Generally, patrons readily avoid games that have explanatory information for game rules, etc. displayed in a language other than their own. Therefore, it would be extremely advantageous to a facility to be able to flexibly change the language of the explanatory information on game terminals depending on the patrons who use such facility.

**[0025]** According to a fifth aspect of the present invention, in the first aspect, the server device further comprises an explanatory information storage unit that stores explanatory information contained in the game images in a plurality of different languages; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating the language in which explanatory information is to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0026]** This demonstrates the same advantageous effects as the fourth aspect of the present invention.

**[0027]** According to a sixth aspect of the invention, the at least one game program is a program for progressing a game where rules switch from among a plurality of different rules; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating timing for rule switch for a game to progress on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0028]** In this game system, the type of action-setting information made to differ on an individual game terminal basis is information indicating the timing for switching game rules. In facilities such as casinos where this game system may be installed, during specified periods (every morning, on weekends, special days, etc.) events may be held where special games can be played in which the applied game rules are different from those during normal hours. The times such events are held may be changed as appropriate in terms of facility operations. In this game system, the manager or operator of the game system can change the settings for the timing for switching the game rules for game terminals simply by inputting change instructions into the instruction input accepting unit. Therefore, changes can be made quickly and easily when it is necessary to change the timing of a game rule switch, such as when the period for holding an event changes.

**[0029]** A seventh aspect of the invention is a game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored and a game terminal.

**[0030]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from a player for a game in progress; a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device; a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data of a game being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in the game data.

**[0031]** The server device comprises a storage unit that stores at least one game program; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any game terminal, read the corresponding action-setting information from the setting information storage unit based on terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal, and transmit the game program and action-setting information that were read to the game terminal.

**[0032]** Here, when the terminal communication processing unit receives the game program and the action-setting information, the control unit of the game terminal executes the game program in accordance with the action-setting information before or during execution of the game program.

**[0033]** This game system is a download-type casino game system wherein a plurality of game programs is stored on a server device, and the game program selected by a player at a game terminal is downloaded from the server device and is executed at each game terminal. With the casino game system of the present invention, as in the thin-client type game system of the first aspect of the present invention, the action-setting information for game terminals is stored in a setting information storage unit of the server device associated with the respective terminal-specifying information.

**[0034]** Once the server communication processing unit receives game selection operation information, the control unit of the server device transmits to the game terminal the game program specified by the game selection operation information and the action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal from which the game selection operation information was transmitted. When the game program and action-setting information are received, the control unit of the game terminal operates according to the received action-setting information before or during game program execution. Thus, this game system is configured so that the actions of the control unit of game terminals before or during

execution of a game are in accordance with individualized action-setting information for each game terminal. Thus, the various processing and various controls relating to game progress performed by game terminals can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis.

**[0035]** Further, in this game system, the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit can be changed in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit. A manager or operator of this game system can input change instructions into the instruction input accepting unit and thus change the action-setting information of game terminals as appropriate. In this way, what kinds of various processing or controls are carried out by a control unit of a game terminal as a game is played can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis.

**[0036]** This game system is similar to the game system according to the first aspect of the present invention, in that a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals can be formed and action-setting information can be changed in units of group.

**[0037]** According to an eighth aspect of the present invention, in the seventh aspect, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating a rule for a game to progress on the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0038]** According to a ninth aspect of the present invention, in the seventh aspect, the at least one program is a program that runs a game that commences on the condition that a bet of at least a prescribed amount is accepted from a player, and the payout amount is determined according to the amount of the accepted bet.

**[0039]** In addition, each game terminal further comprises a bet processing unit configured such that, when the operation accepting unit accepts bet operations from a player, bet processing for accepting a bet amount corresponding to such bet operations will be performed thereby; and a payout processing unit configured to perform payout in accordance with the game results of the player.

**[0040]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information contains information on a prescribed bet amount set so as to differ for each game terminal as specified by terminal-specifying information. In addition, a game rule contained in the action-setting information is a rule to commence a game when the prescribed bet amount, which is different for each game terminal, is accepted from a player.

**[0041]** According to a tenth aspect of the present invention, in the seventh aspect, each game terminal further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in game images in a plurality of different languages; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information that indicates the language of the explanatory information to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0042]** According to an eleventh aspect of the present invention, in the seventh aspect, the server device further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in the game images in a plurality of different languages; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating the language in

which explanatory information is to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0043]** According to a twelfth aspect of the invention, in the seventh aspect, the at least one game program is a program for progressing a game in which rules switch from among a plurality of different rules; and the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating the timing of a rule switch in order for a game to progress on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

**[0044]** A thirteenth aspect of the present invention provides a game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication.

**[0045]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player; a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal and transmit such information to the server device.

**[0046]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information.

**[0047]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit of the server device can execute on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information. In addition, when the control unit has been notified by the play detection unit that a player is not playing at the game terminal, the control unit will read the action-setting information associated with terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal from the setting information storage unit, and execute the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information that was read. Further, the server communica-

tion processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on a game program the control unit is executing and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

**[0048]** This game system is a thin-client type game system, and when the play detection unit has detected that no game is being played, the control unit of the server device executes a specific game program on the game terminal where no play was detected. Normally, when a player who has been playing on a certain game terminal stops playing at that game terminal, unless a special operation is performed when the player stops, the display unit of that game terminal continues to display the game screen of the game the player had been playing. In some cases, a new player wanting to play a game will become interested after seeing a game screen displayed on a display unit of a game terminal no one is playing. Such new players can be encouraged to play a game at such game terminal. However, if the person who decides what game screen is displayed on the display unit of the game terminal not being played is the player who just played, a manager or operator of the game system cannot manage the game screen displayed on the display unit of a game terminal not being played.

**[0049]** In this game system, a play detection unit detects when a player who had been playing on a certain game terminal has stopped playing at that game terminal. At this time, the control unit of the server device executes a prescribed program on that game terminal. Thus, a game screen of a game based on such specified game program is displayed on the display unit of a game terminal not being played. Here, action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit of the server device is information indicating the prescribed game program. A manager or operator of this game system can change the prescribed game program as appropriate by inputting instructions to change such information into the instruction input accepting unit. Thus, the game screen of the game program to be displayed on the display unit of a game terminal not being played can be set as appropriate on an individual game terminal basis. Consequently, for example, the action-setting information can be changed so as to display a game screen of a game a manager or operator of the game system wants players to play, thus making it possible to encourage players to play such games as above.

**[0050]** This game system is similar to the game system according to the first aspect of the present invention, in that a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals can be formed and action-setting information can be changed in units of group.

**[0051]** A fourteenth aspect of the present invention provides a game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication.

**[0052]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player; a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game

operations; and a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received.

**[0053]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal.

**[0054]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit of the server device can execute on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information. In addition, when the control unit has been notified by the play detection unit that a player is not playing at the game terminal, the control unit reads the action-setting information associated with terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal from the setting information storage unit, and executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information that was read. Further, the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on a game program the control unit is executing and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

**[0055]** The fourteenth aspect of the present invention differs from the thirteenth aspect of the invention in that the server device has a play detection unit. The effects of the fourteenth aspect of the invention are the same as those of the thirteenth aspect.

**[0056]** A fifteenth aspect of the invention provides a game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal.

**[0057]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from a player for a game in progress; a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit to the server device game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device; a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the

game data; a play detection unit that detects that a player is not playing at a game terminal; and a prescribed program processing unit configured such that, once notification that a player is not playing at the game terminal is received from the play detection unit, a prescribed program for controlling the control unit based on action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal will be executed thereby.

**[0058]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal.

**[0059]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit can execute on the game terminal specified by the terminal-specifying information. In addition, when the prescribed program processing unit executes the prescribed program, the control unit executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0060]** This game system is a download-type casino game system. The play detection unit detects if a player who has been playing at a certain game terminal stops playing at that game terminal. The control unit of the game terminal executes a prescribed game program on the game terminal. Thus, the display unit of a game terminal that is not being played can be configured to display a game screen of a game based on such prescribed game program. This prescribed game program can be a program downloaded from the server device every time the play detection unit detects that a terminal is not being played, or it may be a program that has been downloaded in advance. In the game system of the present invention, as in the game systems of the thirteenth and fourteenth aspects of the present invention, the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit of the server device is information indicating the prescribed game program. A manager or operator of this game system can change the prescribed game program for the game terminals by inputting instructions to change the information into the instruction input accepting unit. Thus, the game screen of which game program is to be displayed on the display unit of a game terminal not being played can be set as appropriate for each individual game terminal.

**[0061]** As a result, as in the game system of the thirteenth and fourteenth aspects of the present invention, by changing the action-setting information so that, for example, the game screen of a game that a manager or operator of a game system wants played is displayed, players can be encouraged to play such games.

**[0062]** This game system is similar to the game system according to the first aspect of the present invention, in that

a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals can be formed and action-setting information can be changed in units of group.

**[0063]** A sixteenth aspect of the present invention provides a game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal.

**[0064]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress; a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit to the server device game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device; a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data of a game being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data.

**[0065]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal; a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal; and a prescribed program processing unit configured such that, once notification that a player is not playing at the game terminal is received from the play detection unit, a prescribed program for controlling the control unit based on action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal is executed thereby.

**[0066]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit can execute on the game terminal specified by the terminal-specifying information. In addition, when the prescribed program processing unit executes the prescribed program, the control unit executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0067]** The sixteenth aspect of the present invention differs from the fifteenth aspect of the invention in that the server device has a play detection unit and a prescribed program processing unit. The effects of the sixteenth aspect of the present invention are the same as those of the fifteenth aspect.

**[0068]** A seventeenth aspect of the present invention provides a game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals

that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication.

**[0069]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player; a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received.

**[0070]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal, and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and controls the game executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information.

**[0071]** Here, the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game program and control data in accordance with the game operation information. In addition, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit of the server device is prohibited on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information. Further, each game terminal further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing for prohibiting the control unit of the server device from executing the game program indicated by the action-setting information at the game terminal. Moreover, when the execution program restriction unit carries out prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0072]** This game system is a thin-client type game system. The execution program restriction unit prohibits, on an individual game terminal basis, execution of specified game programs from among the plurality of game programs that the control unit of a server device can execute on game terminals. Consequently, the games a player can play will differ depending on the game terminal at which the player plays. Thus, the player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

**[0073]** Furthermore, in this game system, the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage

unit of the server device is information indicating the game programs for which execution on game terminals by the control unit of the server device is prohibited. A manager or operator of the game system can change as appropriate the game program prohibited at any given game terminal by inputting into the instruction input accepting unit instructions to change such game program. Thus, which games cannot be played on which game terminals can be set as appropriate for each individual game terminal. Consequently, not only does such a system enable operations such that a certain game can be played only at game terminals installed in a specified area in a facility, but the location of this specified area can be quickly and easily changed. Furthermore, for example, not only does the system enable operations such that games can be created that can only be played during a specified time period, but the time period can be quickly and easily changed.

**[0074]** This game system is similar to the game system according to a first aspect of the present invention, in that a group comprising two or more game terminals may be formed into a plurality of groups, and the action-setting information changed in units of groups.

**[0075]** An eighteenth aspect of the invention is a game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication.

**[0076]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player; a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received.

**[0077]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal, and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information.

**[0078]** Here, the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game

program and control data in accordance with the game operation information. In addition, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit of the server device is prohibited on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information. Further, the server device further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing for prohibiting the control unit of the server device from executing the game program indicated by the action-setting information at the game terminal. Moreover, when the execution program restriction unit carries out prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0079]** The eighteenth aspect of the present invention differs from the seventeenth aspect of the present invention in that the server device has an execution program restriction unit. The effects of the eighteenth aspect of the present invention are the same as those of the seventeenth aspect.

**[0080]** A nineteenth aspect of the present invention provides a game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal.

**[0081]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress; a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device; a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data.

**[0082]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted by any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal.

**[0083]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit for the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information is prohibited. In addition, each game terminal further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing to prohibit the control unit from executing the game program indicated by

the action-setting information of the game terminal. Further, when the execution program restriction unit carries out the prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of a game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0084]** This game system is a download-type casino game system. The execution program restriction unit prohibits, on an individual game terminal basis, the execution of specified game programs from among the plurality of game programs that the control unit of a game terminal can execute. Consequently, the games a player can play will differ depending on the game terminal at which the player plays, as in the eighteenth and nineteenth aspects of the present invention. Thus, the player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

**[0085]** Further, in this game system, action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit of the server device is information indicating the game programs for which execution by the control unit of a game terminal is prohibited. A manager or operator of the game system can change as appropriate the game program prohibited on an individual game terminal basis by inputting into the instruction input accepting unit instructions for change of the information. Thus, as with the game systems of the eighteenth and nineteenth aspects of the present invention, it is possible to set which game cannot be played on which game terminal on an individual game terminal basis. Consequently, operations are possible similar to those attained with the game systems of the eighteen and nineteenth aspects of the present invention.

**[0086]** This game system is similar to the game system according to the first aspect of the present invention, in that the system may be configured so that a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals are formed and action-setting information is changed in units of groups.

**[0087]** A twentieth aspect of the present invention provides a game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal.

**[0088]** Each game terminal comprises an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress; a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device; a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data.

**[0089]** The server device comprises a storage unit configured to store at least one game program; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same; an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit; a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruc-



tion input accepting unit; and a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted by any given game terminal, and transmit the game program read to the game terminal.

**[0090]** Here, the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit for the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information is prohibited. In addition, the server device further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing to prohibit the control unit from executing on the game terminal the game program indicated by the action-setting information. Further, when the execution program restriction unit performs the prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**[0091]** The twentieth aspect of the invention differs from the nineteenth aspect of the present invention in that the server device comprises an execution program restriction unit. The effects of the twentieth aspect of the invention are the same as those of the nineteenth aspect.

**[0092]** The present invention provides a game system that enables appropriate management and operation on an individual game terminal basis.

**[0093]** These and other objects, features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description, which, taken in conjunction with the annexed drawings, discloses a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0094]** Referring now to the attached drawings which form a part of this original disclosure:

**[0095]** FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino game system according to Embodiment 1.

**[0096]** FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing the hardware configuration of a server device constituting the casino game system.

**[0097]** FIG. 3 is an external view of a game terminal constituting the casino game system.

**[0098]** FIG. 4 is a block diagram showing the hardware configuration of the main control board constituting the game terminal.

**[0099]** FIG. 5 is a block diagram showing the hardware configuration of a sub-control board constituting a game terminal.

**[0100]** FIG. 6 is a sequence diagram showing the process flow when a player is playing a game at a game terminal

**[0101]** FIG. 7 is a flowchart showing the flow of a slot game based on a game program executed by a server device.

**[0102]** FIG. 8 is a diagram for explaining an example of stop patterns when a winning is decided in the slot game.

**[0103]** FIG. 9 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino system according to the Embodiment 2.

**[0104]** FIG. 10 is a sequence flow diagram showing processing when a player plays a game at a game terminal constituting the casino game system.

**[0105]** FIG. 11 is a sequence flow diagram showing the processing flow when a player plays a game at the game terminal 1 of Variation 1.

**[0106]** FIG. 12 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino game system of Variation 2.

**[0107]** FIG. 13 is a functional block showing the main configuration of a casino game system of Variation 3.

**[0108]** FIG. 14 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino game system of Variation 4.

**[0109]** FIG. 15 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino game system of Variation 5.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

**[0110]** Selected embodiments of the present invention will now be explained with reference to the drawings. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure that the following descriptions of the embodiments of the present invention are provided for illustration only and not for the purpose of limiting the invention as defined by the appended claims and their equivalents.

##### Embodiment 1

**[0111]** Now, one embodiment of the present invention where the present invention is applied to a casino game system for a licensed casino facility (hereinafter referred to as "Embodiment 1") will be explained. FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram showing the main elements of the casino game system according to Embodiment 1. This casino game system is a thin-client type game system that is comprised of a plurality of game terminals 1 having no system board, and a server device 50 storing multiple kinds of game programs. In other words, a game based on a game program executed in the server device 50 can be played at each game terminal 1.

**[0112]** The game terminal 1 acts as an interface for a player when playing the game, and is installed at a casino floor where the players actually play the game. On the other hand, the server device 50 is installed in a security room, for example, where the entry by the players is not permitted. This security room is strictly managed by a casino operator. Each game terminal 1 and the server device 50 are connected via a communication network so as to allow a two-way communication therebetween. In a case where a part or all of the functional elements of the server device 50 are installed at a place away from the casino, they may be connected to the server device via a public telephone line, dedicated telephone line, cable television line, communication network achieved by a wireless communication line, etc.

##### Configuration of the Server Device 50

**[0113]** First, the server device 50 of the casino game system is explained. FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing the hardware configuration of the server device 50 according to Embodiment 1. The server device 50 comprises a CPU 51, RAM 52, ROM 53, system bus 54, information storage device 55, input device 56, output device 57, server communication device 58, etc. Elements such as CPU 51 and RAM 52 exchange data and program instructions and the like to each other via the system bus 54. A program for operating the server device 50 in accordance with a predetermined sequence is stored in the ROM 53 and information

storage unit **55**, called up to a working area on the CPU **51** and RAM **52**, and executed as necessary. The information storage device **55** stores multiple kinds of game programs A, B, C and so on that can be played selectively on the game terminal **1**. A new game program can be added to the information storage device **55** or an existing game program can be deleted therefrom by the casino operating staff operating the input device **56**. These game programs may include a game program for a slot machine and a game program for a table game such as black jack and poker, but is not limited thereto.

[0114] When the server device **50** receives game selection operation information from the game terminal **1**, the CPU **51** executes a game program specified by the game selection operation information. Image and audio information according to the progress of the game is created by the executed game program and is transmitted from the server communication device **58** to the game terminal **1**, i.e. the source of the game selection operation information. When the game terminal **1** receives the image and audio information, a game display based on the image information and sound effects based on the audio information are outputted. When the player performs a game operation on the game terminal, the game operation information is transmitted to the server device **50**. The CPU **51** of the server device **50** that has received the game operation information changes the progress of the game based on the game operation information. This allows the player to play the game that progresses in accordance with the game program executed by the server device **50** on the game terminal **1**.

[0115] Note that the server device **50** may be configured as a dedicated control device or may be configured using a general computer system. Also, it may be configured with a single computer or with a plurality of computers connected via a network, each of the plurality of computer being equipped with each of a plurality of functions.

#### Configuration of the Game Terminal 1

[0116] Next, the game terminal **1** of the casino game system is explained. FIG. **3** is a perspective exterior view of the game terminal **1** according to Embodiment 1. The game terminal **1** has a box-shape case **2**, front panel **3** attached to the front side of the case **2** such that it can be opened and closed, and so on. Provided to the front panel **3** are a display window **4** for visibly checking a monitor **11**, coin slot **5a** and bill slot **5b**, spin button **6a**, credit payoff button **6b**, BET buttons **7a** and **7b** for a player to insert coins into the game terminal for playing a game, game selection button **8**, coin receiving tray **9** having a coin payout outlet **9a**, lamps **10a** and **10b**, etc. The spin button **6a**, credit payoff button **6b**, BET buttons **7a** and **7b**, and game selection button **8** are lamp buttons that include a light emitter.

[0117] The monitor **11** is provided to the game terminal **1** internally. This monitor **11** displays a game display based on the image information of a game display transmitted from the server device **50**. In a case of a slot game, for example, a plurality of the same or different symbols that are to be arranged in a predetermined arrangement are respectively displayed in five symbol display areas **11a**. The monitor **11** is configured with a CRT display but may also be configured with a plasma display, liquid crystal display, and the like. Also, the monitor **11** is provided with a credit display unit **11b**, bet display unit **11c**, and winning money display unit **11d** above the five symbol display areas **11a**. The credit

display unit **11b** displays credits equivalent to the amount of money that the player has inputted to the coin slot **5a** or bill slot **5b** (deposit amount). The bet display unit **11c** displays a bet that the player has placed using the BET buttons **7a** and **7b**. The winning money display unit **11d** displays an amount of money that the player has won according to a game result. The game terminal **1** also internally includes a detection device for detecting whether or not the inputted coins or bills are counterfeit, a coin payout device having a hopper capable of holding a large number of coins (not shown), a speaker as a sound output unit, etc. Note, however, that a control unit that executes a game program and progresses the game is not provided in the game terminal **1**, but in the server device **50** as mentioned earlier.

[0118] A card slot **13** for inserting a house card as a portable recording medium used at the casino, and a display device **14** are provided at the upper part of the game terminal **1**. The house card manages personal information that the player has registered at the casino reception and the like. An ID, or unique player identification information for each player, is stored in the house card. The house card is also used for the server device **50** and the like to manage points given to the player in accordance with the amount of money he/she has spent for the game. This makes it easier to award the players privileges such as a hotel voucher. Available points, etc. are displayed on the display device **14**.

[0119] FIG. **4** is a block diagram showing the hardware configuration of a main control board **20** of the game terminal **1**. FIG. **5** is a block diagram showing a hardware configuration of a sub-control board **30** of the game terminal **1**. An input-output port **21a** of the main control board **20** is used in order to communicate with the sub-control board **30**. An input-output port **21b** of the main control board **20** is used in order to communicate with the monitor **11**, lamps **10a** and **10b**, speaker **15**, various buttons **6a**, **6b**, **7a** **7b** and **8**, and coin payout device **16**. An input-output port **21c** of the main control board **20** is used in order to communicate with the server device **50** via the communication network. Various programs such as a communication program that are executed by a CPU **21** are stored in a ROM **22**, and these are outputted to the CPU **21**. Note, however, that no game program is stored in the ROM **22**. A RAM **23** temporarily stores the processing results and the like of the CPU **21**. A video driver **25** controls the display of the monitor **11** under the control of the CPU **21**. A light control unit **26** controls the lighting of the various lamps **10a** and **10b** under the control of the CPU **21**. A sound control unit **27** controls audio announcements, sound effects, and the like that the speaker **15** outputs under the control of the CPU **21**. A payout control unit **28** controls the coin payout device **16** so that coins are paid out from the coin payout outlet **9a** to the coin receiving tray **9** under the control of the CPU **21**. The CPU **21** of the main control board **20** is also connected to the spin button **6a**, credit payoff button **6b**, various BET buttons **7a** and **7b**, and game selection button **8**, and receives operation signals therefrom from the input-output port **21b**. In addition, the CPU **21** is also connected to a deposit amount counting device (not shown) that counts the amount of money put into the coin slot **5a** and bill slot **5b**.

[0120] The sub-control board **30** comprises a CPU **31**, ROM **32**, RAM **33**, card reader **34**, display driver **24**, input-output ports **36a** and **36b**, etc. The ROM **32** stores data such as various programs, various data bases, etc. used by the CPU **31**, which are outputted to the CPU **31**. The RAM

**33** temporarily stores the processing results and the like of the CPU **31**. The card reader **34** reads out a player ID stored in a house card that is inserted to the card slot **13** and outputs the player ID to the CPU **31**. The display driver **35** controls the display of the display device **14** under the control of the CPU **31**. The input-output port **36a** is used for data communication with the main control board **20**. The input-output port **36b** is used for communication with the display device **14**.

[0121] As shown in the functional block diagram of FIG. 1, the game terminal **1** of Embodiment 1 primarily comprises an operation accepting unit **41**, terminal communication processing unit **42**, display unit **43**, credit storage unit **44**, bet processing unit **45**, and payout processing unit **46**. The operation accepting unit **41** comprises a spin button **6a**, credit payoff button **6b**, BET buttons **7a** and **7b**, a game selection button **8**, etc. When a player performs a button operation, the input-output port **21b** sends the operation signal to the CPU **21** of the main control board **20**. Included in these operations is a game selection operation for selecting the kind of game program to be executed by the server device **50**.

[0122] The terminal communication processing unit **42** performs two-way communication with the server device **50** and primarily comprises the CPU **21**, ROM **22**, RAM **23**, and input-output port **21c** of a main control board **20**. When the operation accepting unit **41** accepts a game selection operation as described below, the terminal communication processing unit **42** performs processing for sending game selection operation information for specifying the kind of game program to be executed on the server device **50** to the server device, and when the operation accepting unit **41** accepts various game operations, the terminal communication processing unit **42** performs processing for sending game operation information corresponding to the accepted game operations to the server device. Here, game operation information is information for performing controls such as changing the game progress status based on a game program being executed by the server device **50**. Further, the terminal communication processing unit **42** also performs processing for receiving image and sound information in accordance with the progress status of a game based on a game program being executed by the server device.

[0123] The display unit **43** comprises the CPU **21** and **31**, ROM **22** and **32**, RAM **23** and **33**, video driver **25**, display driver **35**, monitor **11**, display device **14**, and the like. The display unit **43** displays game images on the monitor **11** or display device **14** based on image information received by the terminal communication processing unit **42**. The display unit also displays a screen for game selection as described below on the monitor **11**.

[0124] The credit storage unit **44** primarily comprises the RAM **23** and stores credit data indicating amount of credit in the credit storage area of the RAM **23**. This credit data is used as wagers placed to play a game and as payouts paid out in accordance with the results of such games. The games provided by the game programs executed by the server device **50** may include games such as a slot game or poker game. When a coin or bill is inserted in the coin slot **5a** or bill slot **5b**, a credit in the amount corresponding to the money that was inserted (deposited amount) is stored in the credit storage unit **44**.

[0125] The bet processing unit **45** primarily comprises the CPU **21**, ROM **22**, RAM **23**, and the like of main control

board **20**. When the operation accepting unit **41** accepts a bet operation as described below, the bet processing unit **45** performs bet processing for accepting credit in the amount of the bet amount corresponding to the bet operation (wager). More specifically, when a bet operation is accepted by the operation accepting unit **41**, the bet processing unit **45** performs processing to reduce the credit data in the credit storage unit **44** by an amount in accordance with the bet operation.

[0126] The payout processing unit **46** comprises primarily the CPU **21**, ROM **22**, RAM **23** and the like of main control board **20**. The payout processing unit **46** performs payout processing of paying out credit (payout) in accordance with the play result of a game. More specifically, when a play result of a game is received by the terminal communication processing unit **42**, the payout processing unit **46** performs processing to add credit according to the received information to credit data in the credit storage unit **44**.

[0127] The server device **50** comprises primarily a program storage unit **61**, control unit **62**, server communication processing unit **63**, setting information storage unit **64**, instruction input accepting unit **65**, and setting change unit **66**.

[0128] The program storage unit **61** comprises a RAM **52**, ROM **53**, information storage device **55**, and the like, and stores multiple kinds of game programs A, B, C and the like.

[0129] The control unit **62** comprises the CPU **51**, ROM **52**, RAM **53**, system bus **54**, and the like, and can execute at least two or more game programs simultaneously. When the server communication processing unit **63** receives game selection operation information from the game terminal **1**, the control unit **62** transmits the game program specified by the game selection operation information from the program storage unit **61** and executes the same. At this time, if while the game program is being executed on one game terminal **1**, game selection operation information is received from another game terminal **1**, the latter game program is executed in parallel while execution of the former game program continues. Further, the control unit **62** sends, via the server communication processing unit **63**, image and audio information in accordance with game progress status to the game terminal **1** from which the relevant game selection operation information was transmitted. Further, when the server communication processing unit **63** has received game operation information, the control unit **62** performs control so as to change the game progress status based on the game operation information.

[0130] The server communication processing unit **63** performs two-way communication with each game terminal **1** and primarily comprises the CPU **51**, ROM **52**, RAM **53**, system bus **54**, server communication device **58**, and the like. The server communication processing unit **63** performs processing for receiving a game selection operation or game operation information sent by each game terminal **1**, and for transmitting to the game terminal image or audio information based on the game program being executed by the control unit **62**.

[0131] The setting information storage unit **64** comprises the RAM **52**, information storage device **55**, and the like. The setting information storage unit **64** stores action-setting information of the game terminal associated with a terminal ID. The terminal ID is terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal **1**. The action-setting information associates a terminal ID with rules of a game to be

played at the game terminal **1** specified by the terminal ID. More specifically, action-setting information is information indicating the type of a special game to be played when an event prize is won in a slot game as described below. In this Embodiment 1, because action-setting information is stored separately for each individual terminal ID, what kind of special game is to be played when an event prize is won during a slot game can be set on an individual game terminal basis.

**[0132]** Alternatively, a plurality of groups comprising two or more game terminals can be formed and common action-setting information may be used in units of groups. In this case, a group ID is affixed instead of a terminal ID, and common action-setting information is associated with a group ID and stored in the setting information storage unit **64**. The group ID is common group identifying information affixed to two or more game terminals belonging to the same group. In this way, a common special game can be played on two or more game terminals belonging to the same group, and different kinds of special games can be played among different groups.

**[0133]** The instruction input accepting unit **65** comprises an input device **56** and the like, and receives the input of instructions in order to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit **64**. A casino floor manager or the like performs a change instruction operation on the instruction input accepting unit **65**, instructing it as to the kind of action-setting information to which the action-setting information of the game terminal **1** should be changed. The operation signal indicating the details of this change instruction is sent by the input device **56** to the CPU **51** via the system bus **54**.

**[0134]** The setting change unit **66** comprises the CPU **51**, ROM **52**, RAM **53**, system bus **54**, and the like. Processing for changing the action-setting information is performed by execution by the CPU **51** of a specified program for changing settings. At this time, the setting change unit **66** performs processing to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit **64** in accordance with the change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit **65**. More specifically, when the operation signal (change instruction) is received from the input device **56** constituting the instruction input accepting unit **65**, the CPU **51** performs processing to change the action-setting information of the terminal ID specified by the operation signal to the action-setting information in accordance with the operation signal.

**[0135]** Next, the process flow when a player plays a game on the game terminal **1** is explained. FIG. **6** is a sequence flow diagram showing the flow of the process when the player plays the game on the game terminal. When the player is about to start playing the game on one game terminal **1**, the monitor **11** of that game terminal **1** is usually displaying the display of the preceding game played on that game terminal **1**. The player can choose to play that game or to play another kind of game that is stored in the program storage unit **61** of the server device **50**. When the player chooses to play another kind of game, the player first performs an operation to the operation accepting unit **41** in order to call up a game selection display. Upon this operation, the CPU **21** of the game terminal **1** executes a game selection program, reads out game selection display information stored in the ROM **22** and RAM **23**, and displays the game selection display on the monitor **11**. Note that a case

where the game selection display information is stored in each game terminal **1** is explained in Embodiment 1, but it may be stored in the server device **50** instead. If the game selection display information is stored in the server device **50**, the management efficiency will improve because all the game selection display information can be managed centrally. For example, when adding a new game program or deleting an existing game program, all that has to be done is to change the game selection display information stored in the server device **50**. In this way, the changes can be made easily.

**[0136]** A list of games available for the player on the game terminal **1** is displayed on the game selection display. The player then views the game selection display, and, by operating the game selection button **8**, performs the game selection operation on the operation accepting unit **41** to select a game that the player wishes to play. The game selection operation information corresponding to that operation is transmitted from the terminal communication processing unit **42** to the server device **50**. Here, a case where the player has selected a slot game is taken as an example. When the server communication processing unit **63** of the server device **50** receives this game selection operation information, the control unit **62** of the server device **50** reads out the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from amongst multiple kinds of game programs that are stored in the program storage unit **61**. Then, the slot game begins on the game terminal **1** that is the source of the game selection operation information.

**[0137]** The control unit **62** of the server device **50** transmits, via a server communication processing unit **63**, the image information in accordance with the progress of the executed game program to the game terminal **1** that is the source of the game selection operation information. The game terminal **1** that has received this image information with its terminal communication processing unit **42** displays the game display on the display unit **43** based on the image information. This allows the player to play the slot game that the player has selected.

**[0138]** FIG. **7** is a flow chart showing the flow of the slot game based on the game program executed by the server device **50**. First, when a coin (not shown) is inserted into the coin slot **5a** or bill slot **5b** of the game terminal **1** by a player, the deposit amount is counted by the deposit amount counting device (not shown). Thereafter, the CPU **21** of the main control board **20** in the game terminal performs a credit adding process, in which the number of credits equivalent to the deposit amount counted by the deposit amount counting device are added to the credit data stored in the RAM **23**.

**[0139]** When the player has decided on a desired bet amount, the player operates the BET buttons **7a** and **7b** of the game terminal **1** (**S1**). When the instruction accepting unit **41** accepts this bet operation (game operation), that bet operation information (game operation information) is sent to the server device **50** from the terminal communication processing unit **42**. When the server communication processing unit **63** of the server device **50** receives the bet operation information, the control unit **62** of the server device **50** changes the slot game progress in accordance with such bet operation information. In other words, the state of the game is changed to a state where the spin button **6a** can receive a spin operation (game operation). More specifically, the control unit **62** creates image information indicating the bet amount according to the relevant bet operation informa-

tion and sends this information from the server communication processing unit 63 to the relevant game terminal 1. When the terminal communication processing unit 42 of the game terminal 1 receives this image information, the BET amount relating to the relevant bet operation information is displayed on the BET display unit 11c. The control unit 62 of the server device 50 transmits to the relevant game terminal 1 a bet processing command to deduct the amount of credit in accordance with the bet operation information. When the server communication processing unit 42 of the game terminal 1 receives this bet processing command, the bet processing unit 45 performs processing to deduct the amount of credit relating to the relevant bet processing command from credit data of the credit storage unit 44 (S2).

[0140] Thereafter, when the player operates the spin button 6a of the game terminal 1 (S3), the operation accepting unit 41 accepts that spin operation (game operation). Then, the spin operation information (game operation information) is transmitted to the server device 50 from the terminal communication processing unit 42. When the server communication processing unit 63 of the server device 50 receives this spin operation information, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 changes the progress of the slot game according to the spin operation information. For example, the symbols displayed on the five symbol display areas 11a of the display unit 43 are symbols that are changed randomly one after another. Specifically, image information for changing the symbols to be displayed on the five symbol display areas 11a one after another is transmitted from the server communication processing unit 63 to the game terminal 1. On the game terminal 1 that has received this image information with its terminal communication processing unit 42, the symbols are displayed randomly on the five symbol display areas 11a in accordance with the received image information (S4).

[0141] When the server communication processing unit 63 receives the spin operation information, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 generates five random numbers (S5), and performs a process in which the symbols to be displayed statically in the symbol display areas 11a are determined. Specifically, the control unit 62 compares the five generated random numbers with their respective stoppage position tables. The stoppage position table is provided for each symbol display area 11a. Based on each of the random numbers and stoppage position tables, the control unit 62 determines the stoppage position in the symbol display areas 11a of each of the symbols that have been displayed randomly.

[0142] Further, when the server communication processing unit 63 receives the spin operation information, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 compares a combination of the five random numbers with a predetermined win determination table, and performs a prize drawing process in which whether or not any preset prizes have been won is determined (S6). In Embodiment 1, the prizes are mainly categorized in prizes which award the player predetermined credits, and prizes which allow the player to play an event, bonus game, and feature game that are categorized in a special game status. Then, based on the combination of the random numbers, and the win determination table, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 determines what prize the player has won from the current slot game, or that no prize has been won. In the following explanation, the former prize is taken as an example.

[0143] In Embodiment 1, each win determination table is made to determine a win when a symbol corresponding to one prize is displayed statically in any one of the symbol displaying areas and in its adjacent symbol displaying areas, in relation to the stoppage position table. In other words, an arrangement pattern of the symbols displayed statically in all of the symbol display areas 11a is determined by the five generated random numbers and the stoppage position tables. A winning prize is determined by comparing a combination of symbols that are displayed statically in any one of the symbol display areas 11a and its adjacent symbol display areas with the win determination table. For example, when the symbols displayed in the adjacent symbol display areas correspond to the same prize, a prize has been won.

[0144] FIG. 8 is an explanatory diagram showing one example of a pattern of the symbols statically displayed when determining a win. In this example, five prizes are won. For the purpose of explanation, the five symbol display areas 11a are called, from left to right of FIG. 8, a first symbol display area, second symbol display area, third symbol display area, fourth symbol display area, and fifth symbol display area. As mentioned above, if the symbol corresponding to one same prize is displayed statically on any one of the symbol display areas and its adjacent symbol display areas, the prize is won. With reference to FIG. 8, all of the symbol display areas have the "1st" symbol statically displayed thereon. Therefore, the "First" prize corresponding to the five "1st" symbols is won. Meanwhile, a "W" symbol is statically displayed on the second symbol display area. Here, "W" symbol can be treated as the "1st" symbol. Therefore, similar to the aforementioned case, another "First" prize corresponding to the five "1st" symbols is won. All of the symbol display areas have a "K" symbol statically displayed thereon. Therefore, the "King" prize corresponding to the five "K" symbols is won. Meanwhile, a "W" symbol is statically displayed on the second symbol display area. This "W" symbol can be treated as a "K" symbol. Therefore, similar to the aforementioned case, the "King" prize corresponding to the five "K" symbols is won. Furthermore, a "2nd" symbol is statically displayed in the third and fourth symbol display areas, and a "W" symbol is statically displayed in the second symbol display area. Because a "W" symbol can also be treated as a "2nd" symbol, the "Second" prize corresponding to three "2nd" symbol is won. Note that a prize will be won only in a case where more than three adjacent symbol display areas display a symbol corresponding to the same prize in Embodiment 1. Therefore, with continued reference to FIG. 8, although an "A" symbol is statically displayed in the first and second symbol display areas, because neither an "A" nor a "W" symbol is displayed in the third symbol display area, this does not constitute the "Ace" prize. Of course, the number of adjacent symbol display areas with the same symbol needed to win a prize may be set to be two, four, or greater, instead of three. In Embodiment 1, even a prize corresponding to the same symbol may be treated as a different prize if the number of the same symbols is different. More specifically, even for a prize corresponding to the "1st" symbol, the "First" prize corresponding to three "1st" symbols, the "First" prize corresponding to four "1st" symbols, and the "First" prize corresponding to five "1st" symbols, are considered to be different prizes. Accordingly, a dividend amount will be different for each prize. The more the symbols there are, the bigger the dividend will become.

[0145] In Embodiment 1, a prize is won when a symbol corresponding to one prize is statically displayed in any one of the symbol display areas and in its adjacent areas, but the method for determining the win is not limited thereto. A typical slot game may be employed in which a prize is won when the same symbol is displayed statically on a prize-winning line that lies across all of the symbol display areas, as well as various kinds of slot games.

[0146] When the prize drawing process has thus been completed, and after a predetermined time period has elapsed since the spin operation information was received, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 changes the progress of the slot game so that the random display of symbols in the symbol display areas 11a is stopped at a stoppage position determined by the five random numbers and the stoppage position tables. Specifically, image information for stopping the random display of the five symbol display areas 11a is transmitted from the server communication processing unit 63 to the game terminal 1. When the terminal communication processing unit 42 of the game terminal 1 receives the image information, the random display of the five symbol display areas 11a is stopped according to the received image information (S7).

[0147] In the prize drawing process, if it has been determined that an event prize has been won (S8), the control unit 62 of the server device 50 will first read action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the relevant game terminal from the setting information storage unit (S9). An event prize is a prize available when transition has been made to a special game state, and a special game state is a state where a special game is played. Next, a determination is made whether the kind of special game indicated by the read action-setting information is a jackpot game or a free game (S10).

[0148] An explanation will be given of a case where in this determination, based on the action-setting information, it is determined that the special game is a jackpot game (i.e., when S10 is "yes"). The control unit 62 of the server device 50 changes the game state to a first special game state in which a jackpot game progresses. The jackpot game that is played when transition is made to this first special game state is a game where a portion of credit paid by players playing at some or all of the game terminals is counted cumulatively in a jackpot accumulation storage area of the RAM 52, and if a jackpot prize is won in the jackpot game, credit in the amount of the accumulated value (accumulated jackpot amount) is paid out to the player who won. In the drawing process for determining whether a jackpot prize is won, a random number generated by the control unit 62 of the server device 50 is compared against a prescribed jackpot winning table, and processing for determining whether a jackpot has been won is carried out. The method of staging this drawing can be determined as appropriate. In the event that in this selection processing it is determined that a jackpot prize is won, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 reads jackpot accumulation data from the RAM 52. The control unit 62 sends jackpot winning information, including such jackpot accumulation amount, to the relevant game terminal from the server communication processing unit 63. When the terminal communication processing unit 42 of the game terminal receives this winning information, the payout processing unit 46 performs payout processing.

[0149] More specifically, the payout processing unit 46 performs payout processing by adding an amount of credit

in accordance with the won prize to credit data stored in the credit storage unit 44. In this Embodiment 1, this winning information includes lamp control commands and information for sound effects announcing that the jackpot has been won. Therefore, when the terminal communication processing unit 42 of the game terminal receives the winning information, the CPU 21 of the main control board 20 outputs control commands in accordance with such lamp control commands to the light control unit 26 and the sound control unit 27. In accordance therewith, the light control unit 26 performs lighting control so that the various lamps 10a, 10b, the spin button 6a, the credit payout button 6b, the BET buttons 7a, 7b, the game selection button 8 and other lamp buttons having a light-emitting unit—all of which are in a lighted state—are caused to flash on and off in a flashing pattern indicated by the control command. The CPU 21 of the main control board 20 sends the sound effect information to the sound control unit 27. In accordance therewith, the sound control unit 27 temporarily stops music being output from the speaker 15 as game sounds and performs control so that sound effects are output from the speaker 15. In this way, the various lamp buttons of the game terminal 1 undergo lighting control, and sound effects are outputted from the speaker 15.

[0150] When prescribed conditions for the completion of a jackpot game have been fulfilled, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 causes a transition from the first special game state to a normal game state, where a normal slot game as described above is played.

[0151] An explanation will now be given of a case in which in the above determination, it is determined that a free game is to be awarded based on the action-setting information (S10 is "no"). The control unit 62 of the server device 50 changes the game state to a second special game state where a free game progresses. The free game that is played when transition is made to this second special game state is a game in which a player can play a specified number of slot games without betting credit. Therefore, during this free game period, slot games having the above steps S1 and S2 omitted are played for just a specified number of times.

[0152] On the other hand, in a case in which in the drawing process in S6, it is decided that a player has won a prize entailing the payout of a prescribed credit amount to the player (S13), the control unit 62 of the server device 50 transmits to the relevant game terminal drawing information to such effect from the server communication processing unit 63. At the game terminal that received this drawing information with the terminal communication processing unit 42, the CPU 21 of the main control board 20 performs processing to make such payout (S14). The processing here is the same as processing performed when a player wins a jackpot prize in the jackpot game as described above, and explanation thereof is omitted.

[0153] When the player playing the slot game explained above on the game terminal 1 feels like playing another game, the player will perform an operation to call up the game selection display to the operation accepting unit 41. The game selection display will thus be displayed on the monitor 11 as described above.

[0154] The player can play another game after selecting the game by operating the game selection button 8.

[0155] As described above, in accordance with this Embodiment 1, when during execution of the game program specified by the game selection operation information

received by the server communication processing unit, an event prize is won, the control unit **62** of the server device **50** reads from the setting information storage unit **64** action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal that transmitted the game selection operation information. Either a jackpot game or a free game will progress in accordance with the action-setting information that was read. In other words, with this Embodiment 1, the game rule of whether a jackpot game or free game should be played when an event prize has been won in a slot game can be made to differ for each game terminal **1**. With this casino game system, because a floor manager can change the action-setting information for each game terminal **1** stored in the setting information storage unit **64** of the server device **50** by inputting a change instruction into the instruction input accepting unit **65**, the rules on each game terminal **1** can be changed appropriately. Consequently, a player can play a game with different rules depending on the game terminal at which he/she plays, and thus, the player is given the pleasure of selecting which game terminal to play.

#### Embodiment 2

[0156] Next, another embodiment will be explained in which the present invention is applied to the casino game system similar to that of Embodiment 1 (hereinafter referred to as "Embodiment 2"). FIG. 9 is a functional block diagram showing the main elements of the casino game system according to Embodiment 2. This casino game system is a download-type game system. The server device **50** stores multiple kinds of game programs. Each game terminal **1** downloads a game program that the player has selected from the server device **50** and executes it. Each game terminal **1** is installed on a casino floor where the players actually play the game. The server device **50** is installed in a security room as is the case of Embodiment 1. Each game terminal **1** and the server device **50** are connected via a communication network so as to allow two-way communication therebetween. In a case where a part or all of the functional elements of the server device **50** are installed at a place away from the casino, they may be connected to the server device via a public telephone line, dedicated telephone line, communication network achieved by a wireless communication line, etc. The hardware configuration of the game terminal **1** and the server device **50** are almost identical to those described in Embodiment 1, so an explanation thereof will be omitted. [0157] The game terminal **1** according to Embodiment 2 comprises a control unit **70** in addition to the operation accepting unit **41**, terminal communication processing unit **42**, display unit **43** that the game terminal **1** of Embodiment 1 also comprises. The terminal communication processing unit **42** of Embodiment 2 transmits the game selection operation information to the server device after the operation accepting unit **41** has accepted the game selection operation. The game selection operation information specifies a game program to be downloaded from the server device **50**. The terminal communication processing unit **42** also receives the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information. The control unit **70** executes the game program that the terminal communication processing unit **42** has received and, changes the progress of the game based on the game operation information. The game operation information is generated when the operation accepting unit **41** accepts the game operation from the player. The control unit **70** also performs a control by which an image is displayed

on the monitor **11** and display device **14** according to the game progress, and sounds for the sound effects are outputted from the speaker **15**. In other words, the control unit **70** of Embodiment 2 controls the progress of the game in a similar manner to the control unit **62** of Embodiment 1.

[0158] In Embodiment 2, the control unit **70** provided for each game terminal only has to be capable of executing a single game program, and does not have to be capable of executing a plurality of game programs in parallel as the control unit **62** provided to the server device in Embodiment 1 does. Because the casino game system of Embodiment 1 is a thin-client type, the control unit **62** provided to the server device must be able to execute a plurality of game programs in parallel. Therefore, the processing ability required from the control unit **70** according to Embodiment 2 is much less than the processing ability required from the control unit **62** of Embodiment 1. Therefore, the control unit **70** of Embodiment 2 can be configured with much less cost than the control unit **62** of Embodiment 1. A typical conventional game system comprises a plurality of independent game machines (self-contained game devices), each of which executes a particular game program. In the casino game system of Embodiment 1, on the other hand, many of the functions that were conventionally provided to a game machine are omitted from each game terminal **1**, and are centralized in the server device **50**. This dramatically reduces the cost for each game terminal **1**, thus reducing the cost for the entire system. With the casino system of Embodiment 2, it is possible to reduce the cost as much as the casino system of Embodiment 1 does.

[0159] On the other hand, the server device **50** in this Embodiment 2 is not provided with the control unit **62** that is provided in Embodiment 1. In other words, the server device **50** of this Embodiment 2 is not provided with the functionality to execute a game program and cause a game to progress. The other functions are substantially the same as the functions of the server device **50** of Embodiment 1.

[0160] Next, the process flow when the player plays a game on the game terminal **1** is explained. FIG. 10 is a sequence flow diagram showing the flow of the process when the player plays the game on the game terminal **1**. When the player is about to start playing the game at one game terminal **1**, the monitor **11** of that game terminal **1** is usually displaying the display of the preceding game that was played on the game terminal **1**. The player can choose to play that game or to play another kind of game that is stored in the storage unit **61** of the server device **50**. Similar to Embodiment 1, when the player chooses to play another kind of game, the player will perform an operation to call up the game selection display to the operation accepting unit **41**. Then, the game selection display is displayed on the monitor **11**. Also in Embodiment 2, a case will be explained in which the game selection display information is stored in each game terminal **1**, but it may be stored in the server device **50** as explained in Embodiment 1.

[0161] The player looks at the game selection screen displayed on the monitor **11** and operates the game selection button **8** to perform game selection operation with respect to the operation accepting unit **41** to select the game the player wants to play. The game selection operation information corresponding to such operation is transmitted to the server device **50** from the terminal communication processing unit **42**. Here, as with Embodiment 1, a case will be considered where a player selects a slot game. When the server com-



munication processing unit 63 of the server device 50 receives this game selection operation information, it reads the game program specified by the game selection operation information from among the plurality of game programs stored in the program storage unit 61. The server communication processing unit 63 reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID corresponding to the game terminal 1 that is the transmission source for that game selection operation information. The server communication processing unit 63 transmits the game program and action-setting information read to the game terminal 1 that is the transmission source for the game selection operation information.

[0162] When these game programs and action-setting information are received by the terminal communication processing unit 42, the game terminal 1 temporarily stores these in the game program storage area of the RAM 23. Then, the control unit 70 of the game terminal 1 executes the game program stored in the RAM 23, and causes a slot game to progress. More specifically, the control unit 70 carries out processing so that a game screen is displayed on the display unit 43 in accordance with the progress status of the executed game program. This enables a player to play a slot game that the player selected. As the game status changes as the player performs game operations such as bet operations or spin operations described above with respect to the operation accepting unit 41, the slot game progresses.

[0163] Control of the slot game, except for the point that the control unit 70 provided to the game terminal 1 executes game programs, is the same as for Embodiment 1. In this Embodiment 2, if it is decided in the drawing process of S6 shown in FIG. 7 that an event prize has been won (S8), the control unit 70 reads action-setting information stored in the RAM 23 (S9), and determines whether the special game indicated by the read action-setting information is to be a jackpot game or free game (S10).

[0164] In one configuration, a game program temporarily stored in the game program storage area of the RAM 23 is deleted when the player selects another game to play next. In this case, it is possible to lower costs because it is sufficient for the game program storage area of the RAM 23 to have capacity to hold just a single game program. Alternatively, when the available capacity of the game program storage area of the RAM 23 is insufficient for downloaded game data, some or all of the game programs stored in the game program storage area (for example, the first game program downloaded) can be deleted. In this case, when a game program selected by a player remains in the RAM 23, that game program can be executed without transmitting game selection operation information to the server device 50. More specifically, based on game selection operation information, a search is made for the relevant program in the RAM 23, and if the relevant program is found, it is not necessary to download the program from the server device 50. Accordingly, there is further reduction of the amount of information communicated between each game terminal 1 and the server device 50, with the effect that deterioration of overall performance of the casino game system is suppressed.

[0165] As described above, in Embodiment 2, when during execution of a game program an event prize is won in a slot game, the control unit 70 of each game terminal 1 reads from its RAM 23 the relevant game program along with action-setting information received from the server device

50. Then, either a jackpot game or free game progresses in accordance with the read action-setting information. Further, in this casino game system, because a floor manager can change the action-setting information for each game terminal 1 stored in the setting information storage unit 64 of the server device 50 by inputting a change instruction to the instruction input accepting unit 65, the rules on each game terminal 1 can be changed as appropriate.

[0166] Consequently, a player can play games with different rules depending on the game terminal at which the player plays. Thus the player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal.

#### Variation 1

[0167] Next, a variation to Embodiments 1 and 2 (hereinafter referred to as "Variation 1") will be explained.

[0168] An explanation will be given of a casino game system according to Variation 1 as a thin-client type game system as in Embodiment 1. However, Variation 1 can also be applied to a download-type game system such as that of Embodiment 2. Explanation of the hardware configuration of the game terminal 1 and the server device 50 has been omitted because it is substantially the same as in Embodiment 1.

[0169] FIG. 11 is a sequence flow diagram showing the flow of processing when a player plays a game on the game terminal 1 in Variation 1.

[0170] In Variation 1, the setting information storage unit 64 of the server device 50 stores, as action-setting information of each game terminal 1, information indicating a prescribed bet amount (minimum bet amount) that is a condition for starting a game to be executed by a server device. A player views the game selection screen and operates the game selection button 8, notifying the operation accepting unit 41 of the game he/she wishes to play (here, a slot game). Game selection operation information corresponding to such game selection operation is transmitted to the server device 50 from the terminal communication processing unit 42. When the server communication processing unit 63 of the server device 50 receives this game selection operation information, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 reads the game program specified by the relevant game selection operation information from amongst the plurality of game programs stored in the program storage unit 61. The control unit 62 reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that is the transmission source for the relevant game selection operation information.

[0171] The control unit 62 of the server device 50 executes the game program that was read in accordance with the action-setting information. More specifically, the control unit 62 executes a game program so that the minimum bet amount is the minimum bet amount indicated by the action-setting information.

[0172] More specifically, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 sends, via the server communication processing unit 63, image information in accordance with the progress status of the executed game program to the game terminal 1 that is the transmission source of the game selection operation information. When the game terminal 1 receives this image information at the terminal communication processing unit 42, a game screen based on such image information is displayed at the display unit 43. Thereafter, the player,



simply by pressing the first BET button **7a** once, can bet credit in the amount of the minimum bet amount, and by pressing the first BET button **7a** two times or more, can increase the credit amount bet by such minimum bet amount. By pressing the second BET button **7b**, a player can bet the credit in the maximum bet amount allowed for a single bet.

**[0173]** When the operation accepting unit **41** accepts a bet operation generated when a player pressed the first BET button **7a** once, the relevant bet operation information is sent to the server device **50** from the terminal communication processing unit **42**. When the server communication processing unit **63** of the server device **50** receives this bet operation information, the control unit **62** of the server device **50** sends to the terminal device **1** from the server communication processing unit **63** image information in which the BET amount to be displayed on the BET display unit **11c** is the BET amount representing the minimum bet amount indicated by the action-setting information. When the server communication processing unit **63** of the server device **50** receives bet operation information generated when a player pressed the first BET button **7a** once, the control unit **62** of the server device **50** transmits to the relevant game terminal **1** a bet processing command for reducing credit in the amount of the minimum bet amount indicated by the action-setting information. When the terminal communication processing unit **42** of the game terminal **1** receives this bet processing command, the bet processing unit **45** performs bet processing such that the credit amount relating to the bet processing command is deducted from the credit data in the credit storage unit **44**.

**[0174]** In accordance with Variation 1 described above, the minimum bet that a player must pay to play a game (prescribed bet amount) can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis. Normally, a game terminal **1** set with a small minimum bet amount as a condition for starting a game will be favored by players who bet small amounts and are not aiming for a single large payout. Conversely, a game terminal set with a high minimum bet amount will be favored by players who bet large amounts and are aiming for single large payout. Therefore, for example, a floor manager can set a game terminal to be for players who are large bettors or players who are small bettors by inputting a change instruction into the instruction input accepting unit **65**. For example, by changing the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit **64** of the server device **50** so that the minimum bet amount is increased only for one or more game terminals **1** installed in a specific area within a casino facility, such specific area can be operated as a space for large bettors. Furthermore, if a floor manager simply inputs change instructions into the instruction accepting unit **65**, the space for large bettors can be expanded or moved to a different location, or terminal layout can be otherwise changed. Therefore, in accordance with Variation 1, such terminal layout can be changed quickly and easily, enabling smooth and appropriate operation and management of the casino game system.

**[0175]** In Variation 1, an explanation was given regarding an example where the minimum bet amount to play a game on each game terminal **1** is changed on an individual game terminal basis, but changing game rules other than the minimum bet amount on an individual game terminal basis is also possible. For example, the maximum bet amount when playing a game on each game terminal **1** can be changed, on an individual game terminal basis, using

information indicating a maximum bet amount as action-setting information. Alternatively, in regular slot games, a prize is won when the same symbol is displayed on the prizewinning line that covers the entire symbol display area. Here, information indicating the number of prizewinning lines that can be selected by a player is stored as action-setting information. The number of prizewinning lines that can be selected by a player when playing a game on each game terminal **1** can also be changed on an individual game terminal basis. In any case, because game rules can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis, even if a player plays the same type of game, he/she can play games with rules that differ depending on the game terminal at which he/she plays. Therefore, the player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play.

**[0176]** Not only can these kinds of game rules be changed, but the timing for switching rules of a game played on each game terminal **1** can also be changed on an individual game terminal basis. Such a configuration can be used, for example, when a casino facility is holding a special event. To give a specific example, let us suppose that in the specified period, for example, from 6:00 p.m. until the time that conditions for ending the event are satisfied, a casino is holding an event in which players compete to be the first to win a jackpot prize in a jackpot game, and the winner receives goods or the like from the casino. When an event like this is held, it is desirable to provide settings for two more game terminals **1** installed in a specified event area in a facility enabling slot game play without having to bet credit during the event. A game program for a slot game used for this event must be able to switch between two kinds of rules, namely, a game rule for starting a slot game on condition that a predetermined amount of credit is bet, and a game rule where a slot game is started without credit being bet. In this example, information indicating the timing for switching between the two rules is stored as action-setting information. In this way, an operation is enabled such that if the slot game is played on a game terminal **1** installed in a specified event area after the start time for holding the event, a player can automatically participate in the relevant event. Moreover, simply by inputting change instructions into the instruction input accepting unit **65**, a floor manager can quickly and easily expand or move the specified event area or otherwise change the terminal layout.

#### Variation 2

**[0177]** Explanation will be given for another variation to Embodiments 1 and 2 described above (hereinafter referred to as "Variation 2").

**[0178]** An explanation will be made of a thin-client game system as in Embodiment 1 as a casino game system according to Variation 2. However, Variation 2 can also be applied to a download-type game system such as that of Embodiment 2. The hardware configuration of the game terminal **1** and the server device **50** is substantially the same as in Embodiment 1, and explanation thereof is omitted. Explanation has also been omitted for functions provided by each game terminal **1** in Variation 2 since they are the same as those in Variation 1.

**[0179]** FIG. 12 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of a casino game system in Variation 2.

**[0180]** The server device **50** in Variation 2 is provided with the program storage unit **61**, control unit **62**, server communication processing unit **63**, setting information storage

unit 64, instruction input accepting unit 65, and setting change unit 66, all as provided in Embodiment 1, as well as an explanatory information storage unit 71.

[0181] The explanatory information storage unit 71 in Variation 2 comprises a RAM 52, ROM 53, information storage device 55, and the like. The explanatory information storage unit 71 stores explanatory information contained in game screens displayed on display unit 43 of each game terminal 1 in a plurality of different languages. Explanatory information in Variation 2 is information explaining game rules. In Variation 2, information indicating the language for explanatory information to be contained in game screens displayed on the display unit 43 of each game terminal 1 is used as action-setting information.

[0182] In Variation 2, a player looks at the game selection screen, and by operating the game selection button 8 indicates to the operation accepting unit 41 selection of the game that he/she wishes to play. The game selection operation information corresponding to that game selection operation is transmitted to the server device 50 from the terminal communication processing unit 42. When the server communication processing unit 63 of the server device 50 receives this game selection operation information, the control unit 62 of the server device 50 reads the game program specified by the relevant game selection operation information from amongst the plurality of game programs stored in the program storage unit 61. The control unit 62 also reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source of the relevant game selection operation information. The control unit 62 reads, from the explanatory information storage unit 71, explanatory information corresponding to the language indicated by the read action-setting information. Then, the control unit 62 executes the game program that was read, and causes a game to progress using the game screens generated by the read explanatory information. In this way, the language of the explanatory information on the game screens displayed on the display unit 43 of the relevant game terminal 1 is the language indicated by the action-setting information for the relevant game terminal 1.

[0183] In accordance with Variation 2, the language of the explanatory information contained in the game screens can be made to differ on an individual game terminal basis. In Variation 2, a floor manager can change as appropriate the language in which explanatory information is to be displayed for a game terminal installed in any area by inputting a change instruction into the instruction input accepting unit 65. Consequently, operations in accordance with circumstances are enabled, such that the number of game terminals 1 displaying explanatory information in a language used by many patrons can be increased. For example, if a large number of Chinese patrons on a tour visit the casino facility, the number of game terminals 1 that display explanatory information in Chinese can be increased. Generally, if explanatory information such as game rules is in a language other than a patron's language, such patrons will readily avoid such games. Therefore, operations such that the language in which explanatory information appears on game

terminals can be changed in accordance with the patrons patronizing the facility would be extremely beneficial to that facility.

#### Variation 3

[0184] An explanation will be given for another variation of Embodiment 1 (hereinafter "Variation 3").

[0185] In Variation 3, an explanation will be given using as an example a thin-client type game system similar to that of Embodiment 1. The hardware configuration of game terminal 1 and the server device 50 are substantially the same as that of Embodiment 1, and so explanation thereof is omitted. Similarly, because the functions provided by the server device 50 in Variation 3 are the same as in Embodiment 1, explanation thereof is omitted.

[0186] FIG. 13 is a functional block diagram showing the main configuration of the casino game system in Variation 3.

[0187] The game terminal 1 in Variation 3 is provided with the instruction accepting unit 41, terminal communication processing unit 42, and display unit 43, all of which are also provided in Embodiment 1, as well as a play detection unit 72. In Variation 3, because the other elements provided in Embodiment 1 are not essential, illustration thereof is omitted.

[0188] In Variation 3, the play detection unit 72 comprises a timer (not shown in the drawing) that detects when a player is not playing at a game terminal 1. More specifically, the operation accepting unit 41 measures with the timer the time passed since some kind of operation has been accepted, and if that measured time is greater than or exceeds a fixed time, information indicating that no player is playing is output. This information is transmitted from the terminal communication processing unit 42 to the server device 50. When the server communication processing unit 42 of the server device 50 receives this information, the control unit 62 reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that is the transmission source of the information. In Variation 3, the action-setting information is information indicating the prescribed game program that the control unit 62 can execute on the relevant game terminal 1. The control unit 62 reads from the program storage unit 61 the prescribed game program indicated by the read action-setting information and executes that program. In this way, the control unit 62 performs control such that image information in accordance with progress of the game based on an executed prescribed program is transmitted to the server communication processing unit 63 of the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source for the information indicating that no player was playing. The game terminal 1 that has received this image information with its terminal communication processing unit 42 displays the game display on the display unit 43 based on the image information.

[0189] In accordance with Variation 3, when the play detection unit 72 detects that no player is playing, regardless of the game the immediately prior player was playing, a game screen based on the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information corresponding to the relevant game terminal 1 is displayed on the display unit 43. When a player who had been playing on a certain game terminal 1 stops playing on that game terminal 1, unless a special operation is performed when the player stops, normally, the game screen of the game that player was playing continues to be displayed. A new player wishing to play a

game may see a game screen displayed by the display unit 43 of a game terminal 1 at which no one is playing and become interested in that game. In such a case, such a new player can be encouraged to play that game on the relevant game terminal 1. More specifically, in accordance with Variation 3, the game screen to be displayed by the display unit 43 of a game terminal 1 where no player is playing is decided by action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of that game terminal 1. A floor manager can change the action-setting information of each game terminal 1 as appropriate on an individual game terminal 1 basis by inputting a change instruction to the instruction input accepting unit 65. Therefore, for example, by changing action-setting information so that the game screen of a game that a floor manager wants patrons to play is displayed, players can be encouraged to play that game. If a floor manager wants to change the game screen displayed by the display unit 43 of a game terminal 1 where no one is playing to another game screen, the floor manager can do so quickly and easily by inputting a change instruction to the instruction input accepting unit 65.

[0190] In Variation 3, the play detection unit 72 comprises a timer, and an explanation was given of a case in which it is determined that no player is playing when at least a specified time has passed from the time the operation accepting unit 41 last received some kind of operation. However, the means for detecting some kind of information indicating a high probability that no player is playing at a game terminal 1 is not limited to timers. For example, means that detect that the credit amount indicated by credit data stored in the credit storage unit 44 is zero may also be used. Alternatively, a people sensor for detecting whether a player is at a specified position for each game terminal 1 may also be used. Needless to say, the play detection unit 72 may also be configured using a combination of a plurality of the foregoing.

[0191] In Variation 3, an explanation was given of an example where the play detection unit 72 is provided to each game terminal 1, but it may also be provided to the server device 50. In a conceivable configuration for a play detection unit in this case, for example, the play detection unit 72 comprises a timer, and when at least a certain amount of time has passed since some kind of operation information (e.g., game operation information or game selection operation information) was received from the relevant game terminal 1, determination is made that no player is playing at such game terminal.

#### Variation 4

[0192] An explanation will be given for another variation of Embodiment 2 (hereinafter "Variation 4").

[0193] In Variation 4, an explanation will be made of an example of a download-type game system as in Embodiment 2. Because the hardware configuration of the game terminal 1 and the server device 50 is substantially the same as that of Embodiment 2, explanation thereof is omitted. The functions provided by the server device 50 in Variation 4 are similar to those of Embodiment 2, and thus explanation thereof is omitted.

[0194] FIG. 14 is a functional block diagram showing the primary configuration of the casino game system in Variation 4.

[0195] Each game terminal 1 in Variation 4 is provided with the operation accepting unit 41, terminal communica-

tion processing unit 42, display unit 43 and control unit 70, all as provided in Embodiment 2, as well as the play detection unit 72 and a prescribed program processing unit 73. Because the other elements provided in Embodiment 2 are not essential, illustration thereof is omitted.

[0196] For the play detection unit 72 in Variation 4, one similar to the play detection unit of Variation 3 may be used.

[0197] Further, the prescribed program processing unit 73 comprises the CPU 21, ROM 22, and ROM 23 of the main control board 20. When the play detection unit 72 detects that a game is not being played, the prescribed program processing unit 73 performs processing to cause the control unit 70 to execute a prescribed game program indicated by action-setting information associated with the terminal ID corresponding to the relevant game terminal 1. In Variation 4, when information indicating that a player is not playing is output from the play detection unit 72, this information is input into the prescribed program processing unit 73. In this way, the prescribed program processing unit 73 causes the terminal communication processing unit 42 to transmit an acquisition request for a prescribed game program to the server device 50. Once the server communication processing unit 63 receives the acquisition request, the server communication processing unit 63 reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source of the relevant acquisition request. As in Variation 3, the action-setting information in the present Variation 4 is information indicating a prescribed game program. The server communication processing unit 63 reads, from the program storage unit 61, the prescribed game program indicated by the read action-setting information. The server communication processing unit 63 then transmits the game program that was read to the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source for the acquisition request. When the game terminal 1 receives this game program at the terminal communication processing unit 42, the game program is temporarily stored in the game program storage area of the RAM 23. The control unit 70 then executes the relevant game program, that is, the prescribed game program, stored in the RAM 23. In this way, the control unit 70 causes to be displayed on the display unit 43 a game screen based on image information in accordance with the progress status of a game based on the executed prescribed game program.

[0198] As with Variation 3, in Variation 4, when the play detection unit 72 detects that a player is not playing, regardless of the game that the immediately prior player had been playing, the game screen of a game based on the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information corresponding to the relevant game terminal 1 is displayed on the display unit 43. Therefore, with Variation 4 as well, by changing action-setting information so that the game screen of a game that a floor manager wants patrons to play is displayed, players can be encouraged to play that game. If a floor manager wants to change the game screen displayed by the display unit 43 of a game terminal 1 at which no one is playing to another game screen, the floor manager can do so quickly and easily by inputting a change instruction to the instruction input accepting unit 65.

[0199] In Variation 4 as well, an explanation was given regarding an example where the play detection unit 72 is provided in each game terminal 1, but it can also be provided in the server device 50 as in Variation 3.

[0200] Moreover, in Variation 4, an explanation was given regarding an example where the prescribed program processing unit 73 is provided in each game terminal 1, but it can also be provided in the server device 50. In this case, the following configuration, for example, may also be used for the prescribed program processing unit 73. When the prescribed program processing unit 73 receives information from the play detection unit 72 indicating that no player is playing, it reads action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the relevant game terminal 1 from the setting information storage unit 64. The prescribed program processing unit 73 also reads the prescribed game program indicated by that action-setting information from the program storage unit 61, and causes this to be transmitted to the relevant game terminal 1 from the server communication processing unit 63.

#### Variation 5

[0201] A further variation of Embodiments 1 and 2 (hereinafter "Variation 5") will be explained.

[0202] In Variation 5, an explanation will be given of a thin-client type game system as in Embodiment 1. However, the present Variation 5 can also be applied to a download-type game system as in Embodiment 2. The hardware configuration of the game terminal 1 and the server device 50 are substantially the same as that of Embodiment 1, and thus explanation thereof is omitted. Further, the functions provided to each game terminal 1 in Variation 5 are the same as the functions in Embodiment 1, and thus explanation thereof is omitted.

[0203] FIG. 15 is a functional block diagram indicating the main configuration of the casino game system in Variation 5.

[0204] The server device 50 in Variation 5 is provided with the program storage unit 61, control unit 62, server communication processing unit 63, setting information storage unit 64, instruction input accepting unit 65, and setting change unit 66, all as provided in Embodiment 1, as well as an execution program control unit 74.

[0205] The execution program control unit 74 comprises the CPU 51, RAM 52, ROM 53, and the like. The execution program control unit 74 executes processing to prohibit the control unit 62 from executing, on each game terminal 1, the game program indicated by the corresponding action-setting information. In Variation 5, when a player performs an operation with respect to the operation accepting unit 41 of the game terminal 1 to call up a game selection screen, an acquisition request for the game selection screen is transmitted to the server device 50 from the terminal communication processing unit 42. When the server communication processing unit 63 of the server device 50 receives this acquisition request, the execution program control unit 74 reads, from the setting information storage unit 64, action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source for the acquisition request. This action-setting information is information indicating the game program that the control unit 62 is prohibited from executing on the relevant game terminal 1. The execution program control unit 74 creates a list of games for game programs other than the kinds indicated by the read action-setting information, and generates image information for a game selection screen displaying this list. The execution program control unit 74 then transmits the generated image information via the server communication

processing unit 63 to the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source for the acquisition request. The game terminal 1, having received this image information, causes a game selection screen based on that image information to be displayed by the display unit 43.

[0206] In accordance with Variation 5, a game prohibited by action-setting information corresponding to a game terminal 1 is not contained in a game list of the game selection screen displayed by the display unit 43 of such game terminal 1. Therefore, a player cannot select and play a game prohibited by the action-setting information. Consequently, the games a player can play depends on the game terminal at which the player plays. Therefore, a player is given the pleasure of selecting a game terminal to play. In addition, with Variation 5, a floor manager can change as appropriate the action-setting information of each game terminal 1 stored in the setting information storage unit 64 of the server device 50 by inputting a change instruction to the instruction input accepting unit 65. Therefore, which games cannot be played on which game terminals can be set as appropriate on an individual game terminal 1 basis. Consequently, for example, not only does such a system enable operations such that a certain game can be played only at game terminals installed in a specified area in a facility, but the location of this specified area can be quickly and easily changed. Furthermore, for example, not only does the system enable operations such that games can be made that can only be played during a specified time period, but the time period can be quickly and easily changed.

[0207] In Variation 5, an explanation was given for a case where the execution program control unit 74 excludes a prohibited game from a game list on a game selection screen, but the configuration is not limited thereto. For example, the following configuration may also be used. When the server communication processing unit 63 receives game selection operation information transmitted by a game terminal 1, the action-setting information associated with the terminal ID of the game terminal 1 that was the transmission source for the relevant game selection operation information is read from the setting information storage unit 64. Determination is made as to whether the game program relating to the relevant game selection operation information is contained in the prohibited game programs indicated by the action-setting information, and if it is not contained therein, a command to execute the relevant game program is output to the control unit 62. Conversely, if it is contained therein, a command to execute the relevant game program is not output to the control unit 62.

[0208] Further, in Variation 5 an explanation was given for an example in which the execution program control unit 74 is provided in the server device 50, but it can also be provided in each game terminal 1. The execution program control unit 74 in such a case, for example, receives action-setting information associated with terminal ID of its own game terminal 1 from the server device 50 before displaying a game selection screen, and then causes to be displayed on the display unit 43 a game selection screen with the prohibited game indicated by the action-setting information excluded.

[0209] In the above embodiments (including the variations) explanations were given for cases where the operation

accepting unit **41** is configured with buttons; alternatively, it may also be configured with a touch panel provided on the monitor **11**.

#### GENERAL INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

**[0210]** In understanding the scope of the present invention, the term “configured” as used herein to describe a component, section or part of a device includes hardware and/or software that is constructed and/or programmed to carry out the desired function. In understanding the scope of the present invention, the term “comprising” and its derivatives, as used herein, are intended to be open ended terms that specify the presence of the stated features, elements, components, groups, integers, and/or steps, but do not exclude the presence of other unstated features, elements, components, groups, integers and/or steps. The foregoing also applies to words having similar meanings such as the terms, “including”, “having” and their derivatives. Also, the terms “part,” “section,” “portion,” “member” or “element” when used in the singular can have the dual meaning of a single part or a plurality of parts. Finally, terms of degree such as “substantially”, “about” and “approximately” as used herein mean a reasonable amount of deviation of the modified term such that the end result is not significantly changed. For example, these terms can be construed as including a deviation of at least  $\pm 5\%$  of the modified term if this deviation would not negate the meaning of the word it modifies.

**[0211]** While only selected embodiments have been chosen to illustrate the present invention, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art from this disclosure that various changes and modifications can be made herein without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims. Furthermore, the foregoing descriptions of the embodiments according to the present invention are provided for illustration only, and not for the purpose of limiting the invention as defined by the appended claims and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player;

a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation, and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and

a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and

the server device comprises:

a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;

a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal; a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same;

an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;

a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and

a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information;

wherein before or during execution of the game program, the control unit reads, from the setting information storage unit, the action-setting information based on the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal, and executes the game program according to the action-setting information that was read; and the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game program and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

2. The game system according to claim 1, wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating a rule for a game to progress on the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

3. The game system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one program is a program that runs a game that commences on the condition that a bet of at least a prescribed amount is accepted from a player, and the payout amount is determined according to the amount of the accepted bet; and

each game terminal further comprises:

a bet processing unit configured such that, when the operation accepting unit accepts bet operations from a player; bet processing for accepting a bet amount corresponding to such bet operations is performed thereby; and

a payout processing unit configured to perform payout in accordance with the game results of the player;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information contains information on a prescribed bet amount set so as to differ for each game terminal as specified by terminal-specifying information; and

a game rule contained in the action-setting information is a rule to commence a game when the prescribed bet amount, which is different for each game terminal, is accepted from a player.

4. The game system according to claim 1, wherein each game terminal further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in game images in a plurality of different languages; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information that indicates the language of the explanatory information to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

5. The game system according to claim 1, wherein the server device further comprises an explanatory information storage unit that stores explanatory information contained in the game images in a plurality of different languages; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating the language in which explanatory information is to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

6. The game system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one game program is a program for progressing a game where rules switch from among a plurality of different rules; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating timing for rule switch for a game to progress on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

7. A game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored and a game terminal, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from a player for a game in progress;
- a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device;
- a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data of a game being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and
- a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in the game data; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit that stores at least one game program;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any game terminal, read the corresponding action-setting information from the setting information storage unit based on terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal, and

transmit the game program and action-setting information that were read to the game terminal;

wherein when the terminal communication processing unit receives the game program and the action-setting information, the control unit of the game terminal executes the game program in accordance with the action-setting information before or during execution of the game program.

8. The game system according to claim 7, wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating a rule for a game to progress on the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

9. The game system according to claim 7, wherein the at least one program is a program that runs a game that commences on the condition that a bet of at least a prescribed amount is accepted from a player, and the payout amount is determined according to the amount of the accepted bet; and

each game terminal further comprises:

- a bet processing unit configured such that, when the operation accepting unit accepts bet operations from a player, bet processing for accepting a bet amount corresponding to such bet operations will be performed thereby; and
- a payout processing unit configured to perform payout in accordance with the game results of the player;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information contains information on a prescribed bet amount set so as to differ for each game terminal as specified by terminal-specifying information; and

- a game rule contained in the action-setting information is a rule to commence a game when the prescribed bet amount, which is different for each game terminal, is accepted from a player.

10. The game system according to claim 7, wherein each game terminal further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in game images in a plurality of different languages; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information that indicates the language of the explanatory information to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

11. The game system according to claim 7, wherein the server device further comprises an explanatory information storage unit configured to store explanatory information contained in the game images in a plurality of different languages; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating the language in which explanatory information is to be output at a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

12. The game system according to claim 7, wherein the at least one game program is a program for progressing a game in which rules switch from among a plurality of different rules; and

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information includes information indicating

the timing of a rule switch in order for a game to progress on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information.

13. A game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication, wherein each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player;
- a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and
- a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and
- a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal and transmit such information to the server device; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit of the server device can execute on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information;

when the control unit has been notified by the play detection unit that a player is not playing at the game terminal, the control unit will read the action-setting information associated with terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal from the setting information storage unit, and execute the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information that was read; and

the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on a game program the control unit is executing and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

14. A game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player;
- a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and
- a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit;
- a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and

a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit of the server device can execute on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information;

when the control unit has been notified by the play detection unit that a player is not playing at the game terminal, the control unit reads the action-setting information associated with terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal from the setting information storage unit, and executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information that was read; and

the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on a game program the control unit is executing and control data in accordance with the game operation information.

15. A game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal, wherein each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from a player for a game in progress;
- a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit to the server device game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device;
- a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information;
- a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data;
- a play detection unit that detects that a player is not playing at a game terminal; and
- a prescribed program processing unit configured such that, once notification that a player is not playing at the game terminal is received from the play detection unit, a prescribed program for controlling the control unit based on action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal will be executed thereby; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal; wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit can execute on the game terminal specified by the terminal-specifying information;
- and when the prescribed program processing unit executes the prescribed program, the control unit executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information.

16. A game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress;
  - a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit to the server device game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device;
  - a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data of a game being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and
  - a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data; and
- the server device comprises:
- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
  - a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same;
  - an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
  - a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and
  - a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, the game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted from any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal;
  - a play detection unit configured to detect that a player is not playing at a game terminal; and
  - a prescribed program processing unit configured such that, once notification that a player is not playing at the game terminal is received from the play detection unit, a prescribed program for controlling the control unit based on action-setting information associated with the terminal-specifying information corresponding to the game terminal is executed thereby;
- wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information indicating a prescribed game program that the control unit can execute on the game terminal specified by the terminal-specifying information; and
- when the prescribed program processing unit executes the prescribed program, the control unit executes the prescribed game program indicated by the action-setting information.

17. A game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player;



a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and

a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal, and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and controls the game executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information;

wherein the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game program and control data in accordance with the game operation information;

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit of the server device is prohibited on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information;

each game terminal further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing for prohibiting the control unit of the server device from executing the game program indicated by the action-setting information at the game terminal; and

when the execution program restriction unit carries out prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**18.** A game system in which a server device that executes at least one game program, and a plurality of game terminals that communicate with the server device and provide a player with game data of the game program, are connected in a manner enabling two-way communication, wherein each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations for a game in progress from a player;
- a terminal communication processing unit configured to receive game data provided by execution of a game

program by the server device, and transmit to the server device game selection operation information that identifies the game program specified by the game selection operation and game operation information that specifies the game operations; and

- a display unit configured to display a game image based on image information included in game data that the terminal communication processing unit has received; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a server communication processing unit configured to receive game selection operation information and game operation information sent from each game terminal;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying each game terminal with action-setting information of each game terminal, and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions accepted by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a control unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information received from any given game terminal, execute the game program that was read, and control the game program executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and

the server communication processing unit transmits to the game terminal game data based on the game program and control data in accordance with the game operation information;

the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit of the server device is prohibited on a game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information;

the server device further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing for prohibiting the control unit of the server device from executing the game program indicated by the action-setting information at the game terminal; and

when the execution program restriction unit carries out prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**19.** A game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal, wherein

each game terminal comprises:

- an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress;
- a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game

program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device;

- a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and
- a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted by any given game terminal, and transmit the game program that was read to the game terminal;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit for the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information is prohibited;

each game terminal further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing to prohibit the control unit from executing the game program indicated by the action-setting information of the game terminal; and

when the execution program restriction unit carries out the prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of a game program indicated by the action-setting information.

**20.** A game system enabling two-way communication between a server device on which at least one game program is stored, and a game terminal, wherein

- each game terminal comprises:
  - an operation accepting unit configured to accept game selection operations and game operations from the player for a game in progress;

- a terminal communications processing unit configured to transmit, to the server device, game selection operation information identifying a game program specified by the game selection operation, and receive a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information from the server device;
- a control unit configured to execute a game program received by the terminal communications processing unit, and control game data being executed by the game program in accordance with the game operation information; and
- a display unit configured to display game images based on image information included in the game data; and

the server device comprises:

- a storage unit configured to store at least one game program;
- a setting information storage unit configured to associate terminal-specifying information for specifying a number of game terminals with action-setting information of game terminals, and store the same;
- an instruction input accepting unit configured to accept the input of change instructions for the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit;
- a setting change unit configured to change the action-setting information stored in the setting information storage unit in accordance with change instructions received by the instruction input accepting unit; and
- a server communication processing unit configured to read, from the storage unit, a game program corresponding to the game selection operation information transmitted by any given game terminal, and transmit the game program read to the game terminal;

wherein the action-setting information corresponding to terminal-specifying information is information that indicates a game program for which execution by the control unit for the game terminal specified by terminal-specifying information is prohibited;

the server device further comprises an execution program restriction unit configured to carry out prohibition processing to prohibit the control unit from executing on the game terminal the game program indicated by the action-setting information; and

when the execution program restriction unit performs the prohibition processing, the control unit stops execution of the game program indicated by the action-setting information.

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