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(54) Title: METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR ENHANCED PLAY IN LOTTERY AND GAMING ENVIRONMENTS

(57) Abstract: Methods and apparatus for game play using virtual players, sometimes referred to herein as vBots, is disclosed. In one aspect, a method for game play involves the use of the system electronic system environment described herein, wherein one or more virtual players are displayed to the player of the game, preferably, the virtual players have differing play characteristics, receiving from the user association with a selection of a virtual player, displaying a simulated game using the virtual players, identifying a subset of the virtual players as being winners of the simulated game, and awarding a win to the lottery user if the selected virtual player is in the subset of virtual players. In this way, the player of the game is selecting a virtual player to do the playing of the base game, thereby providing the excitement of player participation in a game of skill or chance, yet not actually be playing the game. Yet another parameter for modified and enhanced game play is the arrangement and presentation of various graphics, symbols, or icons (collectively "indicia") to the player. The arrangement of the indicia in a predefined arrangement indicates that the player has won. By way of example, a grid or array arrangement may be used wherein the winning combination is a set of indicia arranged in a line, either horizontally in a row, vertically in a column or diagonally. Other patterns using multiple adjoining segments may be used, such as an X-pattern or a T-pattern. Alternatively, a predefined pattern of non-adjoining segments may be used, such as where a win includes matches in a four corners or north, south, east and west positions.



WO 2007/067375 A3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC: A63F 13/00(2006.01),13/12(2006.01)

USPC: 463/1,17

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 463/1,17

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
NPL from applicant's IDS in case 11/294,683

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
EAST Search Engine

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US Pat. 7,309,280 (Toyoda) 18 Dec. 2007 (18.12.2007), Figs. 1-11, columns 1-24	1-5, 14-16, and 20-28
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Y		6-7
Y	US Pat. 5,842,921 (Mindes et al) 01 Dec. 1998 (01.12.1998), Title, col. 2, 1-67	8-12, 17-19
Y	US 6,749,500 (Nelson et al) 15 June 2004 (15.06.2004), see Title, col. 8, 16-20)	13

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document member of the same patent family

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