



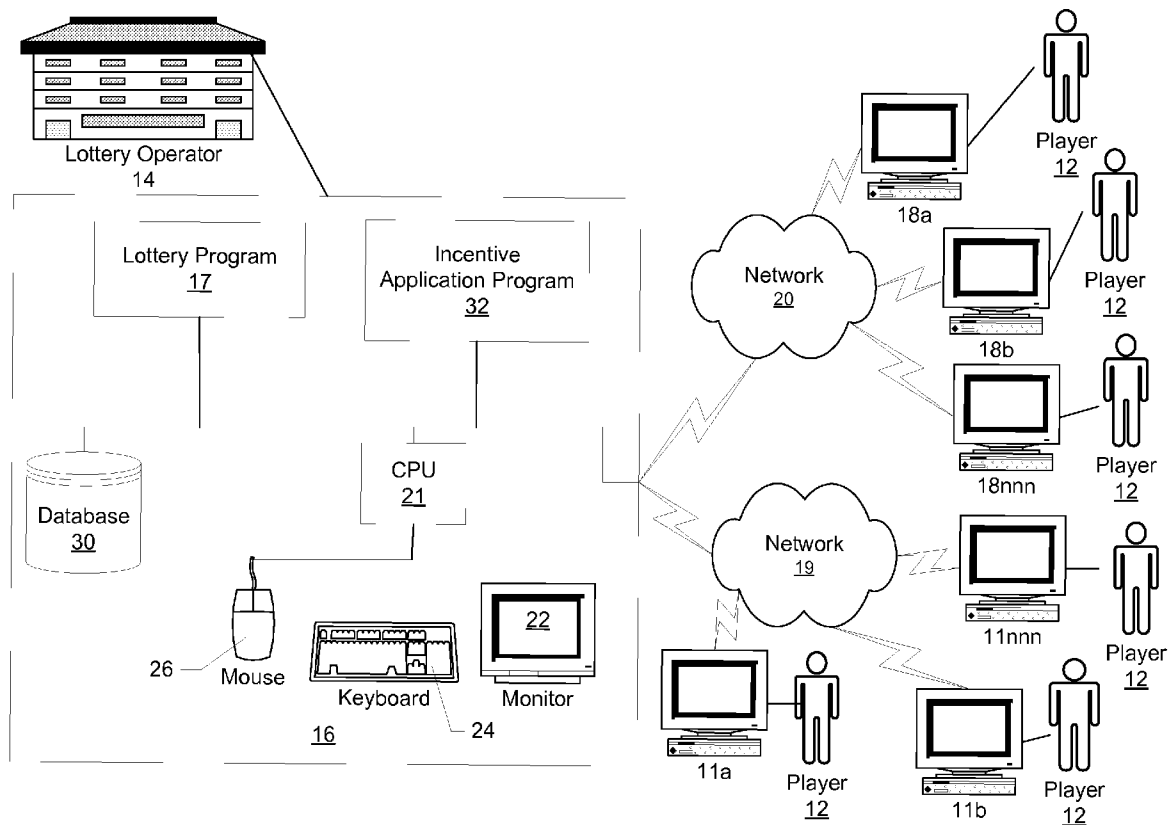
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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Amada et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2009/0156285 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jun. 18, 2009**(54) **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR LOTTERY
INCENTIVE ROLLOVERS WITHOUT
RE-QUALIFYING**(76) Inventors: **Andrew R. Amada**, Phoenix, AZ
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12, 2007.**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63F 9/24 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** **463/17**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A system and method for selling lottery tickets offers players an option to make a first purchase of one or more bonus lottery plays sets after meeting a qualifying purchase, and a second option to purchase one or more rollover play sets based on the winning outcome of the first purchase, without having to make any further qualifying purchases. The system determines whether a lottery ticket presented for validation includes one or more winning plays as well as bonus lottery play sets. If the lottery ticket includes a bonus lottery play set, the system makes an offer for the holder to purchase one or more rollover play sets without requiring another qualifying purchase. Each of the bonus lottery play sets and the rollover play sets comprises a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set or two or more fractional lottery plays.



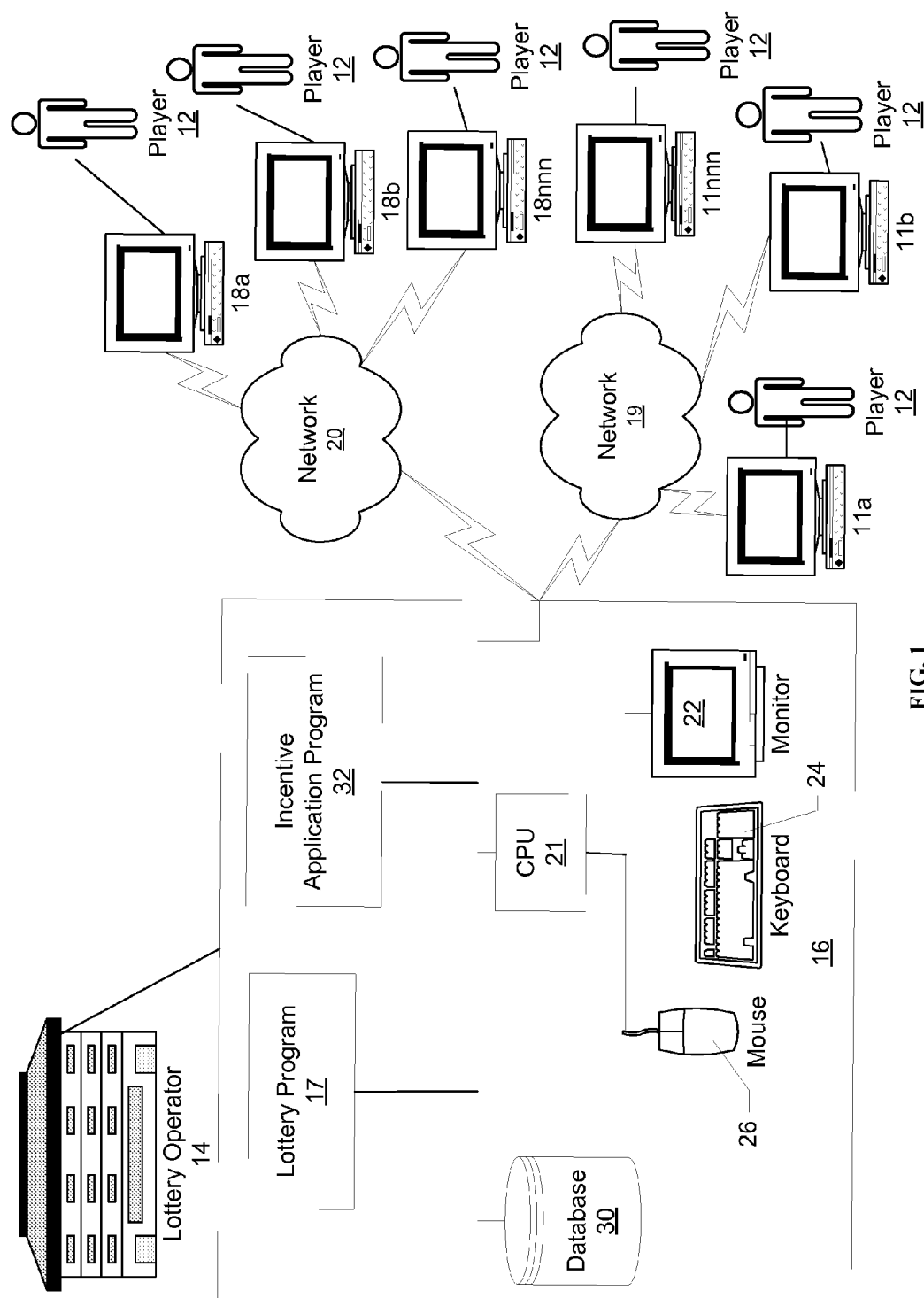


FIG. 1

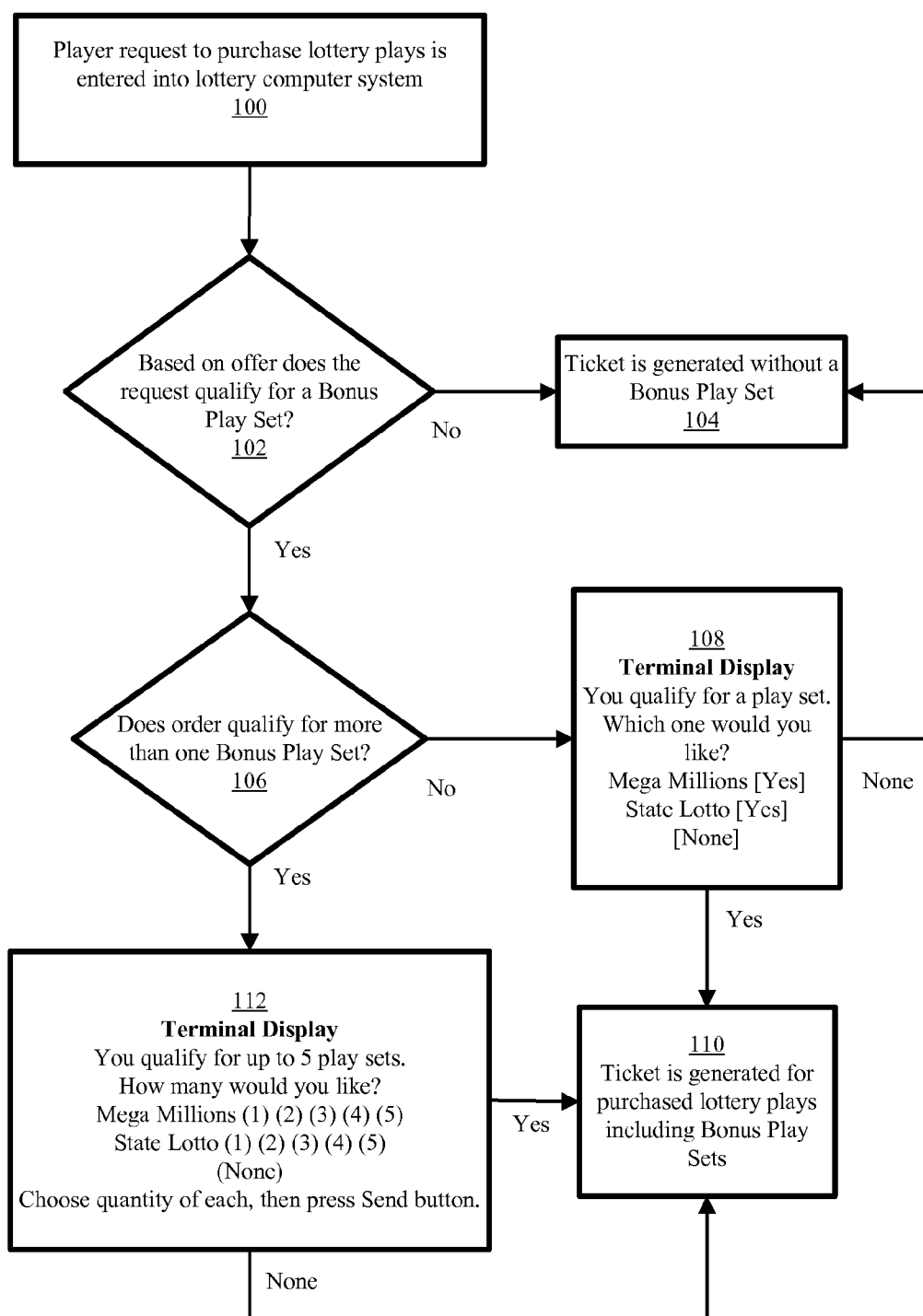


FIG. 2

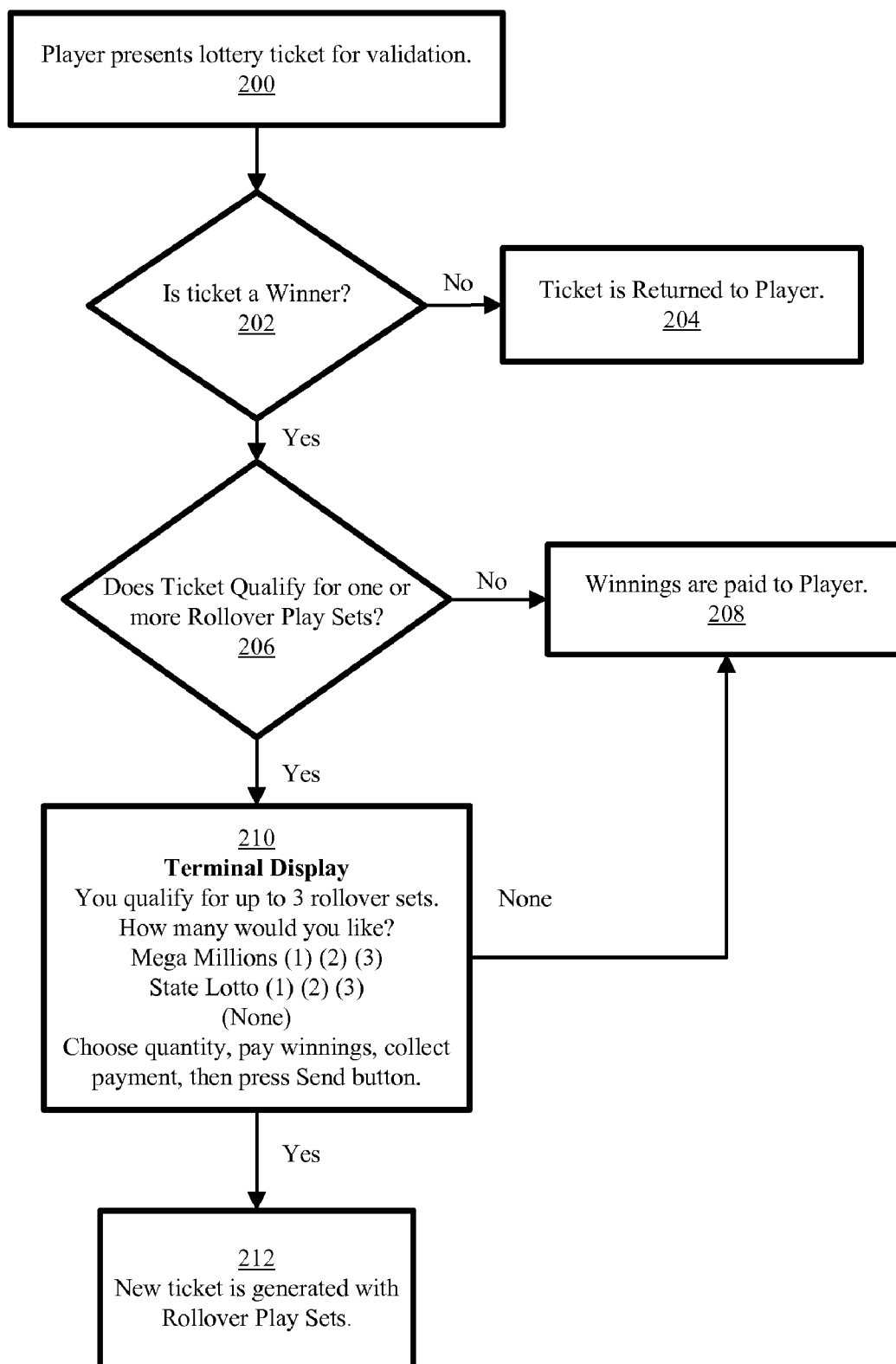


FIG. 3

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR LOTTERY INCENTIVE ROLLOVERS WITHOUT RE-QUALIFYING

RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application is based on and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/012,989 filed on Dec. 12, 2007, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein in its entirety by this reference.

BACKGROUND

[0002] This invention pertains generally to systems and methods for selling lottery tickets. More particularly, it relates to a system and method for selling lottery tickets that offers players an option to make a first purchase of one or more sets of lottery plays after meeting a qualifying purchase, and a second option to purchase one or more additional sets of plays based on the winning outcome of the first purchase, without having to make any further qualifying purchases.

[0003] It is important for state, provincial and other lotteries worldwide to increase their lottery revenues. One method is to raise the price of the standard lottery ticket, which traditionally sells for \$1. The problem, however, is that players think in terms of whole dollars and not fractions of a dollar, and raising the price from \$1 to \$2 jeopardizes losing too large a portion of the player base, who would resist such a drastic change.

[0004] It is also important for state, provincial and other lotteries worldwide to sustain player interest in their lotto games and products that have been offered by the lotteries for years. Yet, sustaining player interest in these maturing lottery games and products, particularly in the large interstate jackpot games, has proven more and more difficult every year due to increasing odds and a greater difficulty in winning meaningful prizes. For example, the Powerball™ and Mega Millions® games typically must now achieve a jackpot prize of \$100 million to generate the same sales that were previously generated at a jackpot prize of \$50 million. At every jackpot level below \$100 million there is less and less player interest than there was a year or two prior, even after adding in the population base from new states joining these games.

[0005] One method lotteries have turned to is to offer players an option that can be exercised along with a purchase of a base game that the lottery is trying to promote. For example, pursuant to one such offer, a player buys one ticket in the state lotto game and for an extra \$1 the player receives a chance to win \$100 from a separate bonus drawing. This method provides players an option to spend an extra dollar for an additional chance to win, and the player can't get that option without first paying for the base game. These options, however, have their shortcomings. They have provided only a minimal incentive to players to purchase the qualifying game. In addition, if a player is inclined to purchase more than one chance to win in the separate bonus drawing, the presently known options discourage the player from doing so. For example, the player has to re-qualify for the desired second bonus purchase by purchasing another ticket for the base game.

[0006] Therefore, there is a need for a new marketing method and system for lotto game promotions that can better incentivize players to make initial purchases in a qualifying game and a more beneficial way to purchase additional bonus plays.

[0007] One object of the present invention is to provide such a method and system that can produce powerful sales incentives of: new options, easy access, more chances to win, and more play variety and excitement, in order to capture new players, recapture lost players, and re-energize current players to purchase more tickets.

[0008] Another object is to provide state lotteries with a marketing product and method of promotion that can invigorate interest and increase sales without requiring them to endure the inconvenience and expense of a game change.

[0009] Additional objects and advantages of the invention are set forth in the following description, and in part will be apparent from the description, or can be learned by practice or observation of the invention. The objects and advantages of the invention may be realized and obtained by means of the methods and apparatus pointed out in the appended claims.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] To achieve the foregoing objects, and in accordance with the purposes of the invention as embodied and broadly described in this document, there is provided a computer system for selling lottery tickets. The system includes one or more input devices for receiving requests to purchase lottery plays and requests to validate winning lottery plays, an output device for issuing a lottery ticket; and one or more processors. The processors are programmed for receiving a request to purchase a lottery play and determining whether the lottery play is a qualifying lottery play, wherein the purchaser of a qualifying lottery play has an option to purchase one or more bonus lottery play sets each comprising a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set of two or more fractional lottery plays. The processors also are programmed for receiving a request to validate a lottery ticket and validating the ticket to determine whether it includes winning plays. If the lottery ticket includes winning plays, the processors determine the prize for each winning play and determine whether the lottery ticket includes a bonus lottery play set. If the lottery ticket includes a bonus lottery play set, the processors make an offer for the holder to purchase one or more rollover play sets without requiring another qualifying purchase, wherein each of the rollover play sets comprises a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set of two or more fractional lottery plays.

[0011] Presently, lotteries don't give the players an option for a set of plays nor do they give them an opportunity to continue purchasing more sets of plays without additional qualifiers, depending on the outcome of winnings. The invention provides a significant incentive for the player to make additional purchases, which has not been achieved with previous lottery bonus play options. The inventors believe that players count the odds in their hands more than the odds in their head. Therefore, players will value multiple plays more highly than a single play that might have the same economic value. By having an initial qualifying offer with the option to buy a set of plays (whether it be a pool of plays being shared by more than one player, a set of fractional plays, or a set of whole plays), the offer will be more enticing to the player than just one chance for another prize. Moreover, the second opportunity to purchase one or more sets of plays, depending on the prizes won from the previous set of plays purchased, without have to make any further qualifying purchase, further enhances the initial offer. The multi-step opportunity of

nested incentives provides the player with a stronger incentive to buy the initial qualifying purchase, which will increase sales.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of the specification, illustrate the presently preferred embodiments of the invention and, together with the general description given above and the detailed description of the preferred methods and embodiments given below, serve to explain the principles of the invention.

[0013] FIG. 1 is a functional block diagram of a preferred lottery computer system and a network for practicing the present invention.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a block diagram depicting a process for receiving a player order for a Required Qualifying Purchase and initial Bonus Play Sets according to the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a block diagram depicting a process for redeeming a winning ticket for a prize that gives the ticket holder the option to purchase additional Bonus Play Sets without a qualifying purchase according to the present invention.

DESCRIPTION

[0016] In the following description, methods and embodiments of the invention have been shown and described simply by way of illustration of the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out the invention. As will be realized, these methods and embodiments can be modified in various respects, all without departing from the invention. Accordingly, the drawings and description are to be regarded as illustrative in nature, and not restrictive.

[0017] The invention is directed to a process and system that initially requires a qualifying purchase and, based on the prize, subsequently offers lottery players the opportunity to purchase multiple additional lottery plays, multiple fractional lottery plays, one or more pools of shared-ownership lottery plays, or other lottery products or forms of lottery plays (Bonus Play Sets), as defined by the lottery, without having to make another qualifying purchase.

[0018] For example, a state lottery may have made an initial offer that calls for a purchase of two regular lottery plays at \$1 each (the Required Qualifying Purchase), before the player could be qualified to spend an additional \$1 or other amount for Bonus Play Sets. The Bonus Play Sets could be a set of 10 plays having a prize share of 100% each, a pool of 10 shared-ownership plays having a prize share of 10% each, or 10 fractional lottery plays having a prize share of 10% each. After the initial purchase, the player can purchase additional Bonus Play Sets depending upon the resulting winnings from the plays on the initial ticket, without having to make any other additional purchase.

[0019] In addition to the marketing benefits associated with a player being able to purchase the additional Bonus Play Sets without having to make any further qualifying purchase, the invention allows the lottery to combine, automate and 'internalize' the processes and transaction steps of: small prize win validation, small prize cash payout to winning ticket holders, repayment of small prize payout to the lottery toward the purchase of additional Bonus Play Sets, and the printing of the new ticket.

[0020] FIG. 1 illustrates a preferred computer network system for providing incentive rollovers without re-qualifying according to the present invention. The system includes a lottery computer system 16. The lottery computer system 16 stores and processes information regarding rules pertaining to the Required Qualifying Purchases and the Bonus Play Sets, the requests to purchase additional Bonus Play Sets, and the incentive rollover rules, as described below. In a presently preferred embodiment, the lottery computer system 16 also can include a lottery program 17 for tracking each ticket that is issued with a single transaction serial number, as is known in the art. The lottery computer system 16 is operated by a lottery operator 14, which can be a governmental entity, such as a state lottery, or a representative of a state. One example of a lottery operator that is a representative of a state is the Georgia Lottery Corporation, which is referred to as a quasi-state agency and which runs the lottery for the state of Georgia. The lottery operator 14 also can include a third-party provider that operates the lotto games for a state or other governmental entity. Players 12 can purchase lottery plays via lottery terminals 11a, 11b and 11nnn, (where nnn refers to any number of lottery terminals) coupled to the lottery computer system 16 via a network 19 or other suitable communications means. Players also can purchase lottery plays via user computers 18a, 18b, 18nnn coupled to the lottery computer system 16 via a computer network 20, such as the Internet, or by telephone or other suitable communications means.

[0021] Still referring to FIG. 1, the lottery computer system 16 includes a central processing unit (CPU) 21 for processing data and program instructions. The computer system 16 also includes input and output devices, as is well known in the art. For example, the computer 16 preferably includes a display screen or monitor 22, a keyboard 24, a mouse 26, a printer (not shown), etc. The computer system 16 further includes data storage and memory devices, as are known in the art, for storing a database 30. The database 30 is used to store lottery data, as well as shared-ownership lottery play information and the fractional lottery play information. Preferably, the database 30 is a relational database, as is well known in the art. An incentive application program 32 is operable with the database to provide the functionality described below.

[0022] The lottery computer system 16 is connected to the network 19, which serves as a communications medium with lottery terminals 11a, 11b, 11nnn and the lottery computer system 16. In a preferred embodiment, the lottery computer system 16 is also connected to the network 20, which serves as a communications medium for user computers 18a, 18b, 18nnn (where nnn refers to any number of users) and the lottery computer system 16. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the network 20 comprises the Internet. Upon reading this specification, those skilled in the art will now understand that, under appropriate circumstances, considering issues such as developments in computer hardware, software and connectivity, etc., other network configurations and devices also may suffice, such as for example, PDAs connected via a wireless network, etc.

[0023] The system of FIG. 1 automates the process for receiving a player order for a Required Qualifying Purchase and initial Bonus Play Sets, as described in Referring to FIG. 2, as well as the process for redeeming a winning ticket for The Win and paying for the purchase of additional Bonus Play Sets, which are referred to in FIG. 3 as Rollover Play Sets.

[0024] Referring to FIG. 2, a player request to purchase one or more lottery plays for a given game is entered into the lottery computer system 16 (step 100). This request can be entered via one of the lottery terminals 11, such as those that are typically located at retailer locations, in the manner presently known, or it can be entered by the player via one of the user computers 18. The lottery computer system 16 then processes the request by determining whether the requested purchase meets the rules for a Required Qualifying Purchase (step 102). If it does not, the lottery computer system takes the necessary steps to generate a ticket for the requested purchase without a Bonus Play Set (step 104). The ticket can then be printed in a manner presently known, such as being printed at the retailer location where the player requested to purchase the plays reflected by the ticket.

[0025] Referring again to step 102, if the requested purchase meets the rules for a Required Qualifying Purchase, the lottery computer system 16 then determines whether the requested purchase qualifies for more than one Bonus Play Set (step 106). As explained above, a Bonus Play Set preferably is a set of whole plays, a pool of plays or a set of fractional plays, wherein each set includes two or more plays. Bonus Play Sets can be for the same lottery game as the Required Qualifying Purchase, or they can be for a different game. If the requested purchase qualifies for one Bonus Play Set, the lottery computer system 16 sends a message for display on the appropriate lottery terminal 11 or user computer 18 indicating that the player qualifies for a Bonus Play Set and providing choices of the various Bonus Play Sets that are available for purchase (step 108). If the player declines to purchase a Bonus Play Set, the lottery computer system 16 takes the necessary steps to generate a ticket for the requested purchase without a Bonus Play Set (step 104). The ticket can then be printed in a manner presently known, such as being printed at the retailer location where the player requested to purchase the plays reflected by the ticket. If the player chooses to purchase a Bonus Play Set, the lottery computer system 16 takes the necessary steps to generate a ticket for the qualifying requested purchase and the selected Bonus Play Set (step 110). The ticket reflecting the purchased plays can then be printed as is previously known.

[0026] Referring again to step 106, if the requested purchase qualifies for more than one Bonus Play Set, the lottery computer system 16 sends a message for display on the appropriate lottery terminal 11 or user computer 18 indicating that the player qualifies for multiple Bonus Play Sets and providing choices of the various Bonus Play Sets and the number of them that are available for purchase (step 112). The lottery can change the displayed Bonus Play Set depending on the offer. If the player declines to purchase any of the Bonus Play Sets, the lottery computer system 16 takes the necessary steps to generate a ticket for the requested purchase without a Bonus Play Set (step 104). The ticket can then be printed in a known manner as discussed above. If the player chooses to purchase one or more of the Bonus Play Sets, the lottery computer system 16 takes the necessary steps to generate a ticket for the qualifying requested purchase and the selected Bonus Play Sets (step 110). The ticket reflecting the purchased plays can then be printed as is previously known.

[0027] The Rollover Play Sets are lottery play sets that the player normally would not be offered without first making a qualifying purchase. According to one aspect of the invention, however, the Rollover Play Sets are offered to the holder of a winning ticket without making a qualifying purchase,

pursuant to the process shown in FIG. 3. Referring to FIG. 3, a player 12 can redeem such a winning ticket that falls within the specific rules of being a Qualifying Defined Win toward the purchase of one or more Rollover Play Sets. To begin this process, the player 12 presents a ticket for validation in a manner previously known (step 200). For example, the player can present the ticket to a lottery ticket retailer who then validates the ticket according to previously known lottery procedures, such as by scanning or otherwise input the ticket transaction serial number into the lottery computer system 16 via a lottery terminal 11. The lottery computer system 16 then validates the ticket to determine whether it is a winner (step 202). If it is not, the ticket is handled according to previously known lottery procedures, such as returning it to the player 12 (step 204). If the ticket is a winning ticket, the lottery computer system 16 determines whether the ticket qualifies the holder for the purchase of one or more Rollover Play Sets (step 206), which can be a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set of two or more fractional lottery plays. If the ticket does not qualify for a Rollover Play Set, The Win is paid to the player (step 208) according to previously known procedures.

[0028] Referring again to step 206, if the ticket qualifies for one or more Rollover Play Sets, the lottery computer system 16 sends a message for display on the appropriate lottery terminal 11 or user computer 18 indicating that the player qualifies for one or more Rollover Play Sets and providing choices of the various Rollover Play Sets and the number of them that are available for purchase (step 210). Depending on the lottery rules, The Win may allow the holder of the winning ticket to qualify for multiple Rollover Play Sets. If the player declines to purchase any of the Rollover Play Sets, the player is paid for The Win according to the lottery's existing prize payout rules (step 208). If the player chooses to purchase one or more of the Rollover Play Sets, the lottery computer system 16 takes the necessary steps to generate a new ticket for the selected Rollover Play Sets (step 212). After payment to the winner for the winnings and payment by the player, the ticket reflecting the purchased plays can then be printed as is previously known.

[0029] According to another aspect of the invention, the purchase price for the Rollover Play Sets can be less than The Win. The player's payment for the Rollover Play Sets can be collected in various ways, e.g. a retailer may choose to pay the player for The Win and separately charge the player for the purchase of the Rollover Play Sets. Alternatively, the amount of The Win may be automatically applied toward the purchase of the Rollover Play Sets so that the player is only charged for the difference between purchase price for the Rollover Play Sets and The Win. For example, if the message of step 210 is displayed on a retailer lottery terminal 11, a selection could be provided to allow the retailer to direct the lottery computer system 16 to automatically apply The Win toward the purchase of the new Rollover Play Sets, print the appropriate ticket, and notify the retailer of the balance due by the player. (In some states where the player may be required to pay for their lottery purchase before the ticket is printed, the displayed message would instruct the retailer to collect the amount of the balance due before making the selection to apply The Win and print the ticket.) The message of step 210 also could provide a selection to allow the retailer to decline the offer of Rollover Play Sets. In response to that selection, the lottery computer system 16 could generate a message

instructing the retailer to conclude the transaction as per that lottery's existing prize payout rules.

[0030] From the foregoing disclosure, it will be apparent to those of skill in the art that the system and method of the invention present a number of advantages. It provides a method and system that can produce powerful sales incentives for capturing new players, recapturing lost players, and re-energizing current players to purchase more tickets. It provides state lotteries with a marketing product and method of promotion that can invigorate interest and increase sales without requiring them to endure the inconvenience and expense of a game change.

We claim:

1. A computer system for selling lottery tickets, the method comprising:

one or more input devices for receiving requests to purchase lottery plays and requests to validate winning lottery plays;

an output device for issuing a lottery ticket; and

one or more processors programmed for:

receiving a request to purchase a lottery play;

determining whether the lottery play is a qualifying lottery play, wherein the purchaser of a qualifying lottery

play has an option to purchase one or more bonus lottery play sets each comprising a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set of two or more fractional lottery plays

receiving a request to validate a lottery ticket;

validating the ticket to determine whether it includes winning plays;

if the lottery ticket includes winning plays, determining the prize for each winning play;

if the lottery ticket includes winning plays, determining whether the lottery ticket includes a bonus lottery play set;

if the lottery ticket includes a bonus lottery play set, making an offer for the holder to purchase one or more rollover play sets without requiring another qualifying purchase, wherein the each of the one or more rollover play sets comprises a set of two or more whole lottery plays, a pool of shared-ownership lottery plays, or a set of two or more fractional lottery plays.

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