Abstract: A system and method are provided to allow gambling establishments to create new and innovative ways to attract new players, drive players at particular games on the gaming floor, educate players to new games, keep players engaged in these games for an extended period of time, extend and enhance these games in an integrated way in order to provide a greater level of excitement, evoke positive emotions and experiences that ultimately promote higher durations of engagement and play.
SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING GAME EXTENSIONS

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

The field of the invention relates generally to gaming and more particularly to introducing game elements that enhance game play and player engagement across one or many games.

Some gambling establishments may provide players with coupons and awards to entice play on the gaming floor. In some cases, these coupons and awards are only usable with particular games on the floor of the gaming establishment. In these cases, these coupons and awards are simply currencies or virtual currencies that grant entry to the game or help the player to place a bet. Unfortunately, they do not enhance or extend the gaming experience in an integrated way, and thus may not adequately promote higher durations of engagement or play.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

Aspects and embodiments of the present invention are directed to systems and methods that provide for gambling establishments or others to create game extensions and provide players with game extensions and game variations that attract new players, track engagement by new and existing players, and/or modify or enhance the game play, thereby creating more opportunities to educate players to new games, attract players to a particular game on the gaming floor, keep players engaged in that game for an extended period of time, provide a greater level of excitement, and produce positive emotions and experiences, which ultimately promotes higher durations of engagement and play.

In one embodiment, a game extension may be provided that, when activated, provides one or more enhancements to game play including, but not limited to new or adjusted rules used with the game, new or adjusted pay tables, bet protection or insurance features, permitting the player to place side bets, and providing the player the ability to convert one game into another (e.g., converting a conventional Blackjack game to Spanish Blackjack).

These methods may be used, for example, by gambling establishments to enhance the awareness of, attraction to, and engagement with particular games on the gaming floor. In another embodiment, one or more of these methods may also be used by gaming establishments in conjunction with table, mechanical, electronic and online versions of their games. These methods can also be used by gambling establishments to create online
extensions of the gaming experience that exists on the floor of the gambling establishment to extend the player relationship and player experience to other devices, applications, and situations.

For instance, it may be desired to generate increased interest for table-based games on a casino floor. To drive such interest, one or more "enhancements" may be provided to a player that increases the desire to play such games. In contrast to providing conventional free play, such gaming enhancements can be player-activated and provide an enhanced experience that attracts players to such games. Game "enhancements" can also be provided in addition to free play provided by the gaming operator.

Further, these methods can be used by land-based gambling establishments to integrate PC and mobile phone applications into their games and marketing programs. These methods can be also used by Internet-based gambling establishments to integrate PC and mobile phone applications into their games and marketing programs.

These methods can be also used by gambling establishments to track the play of players who do not sign up for their player club.

These methods can be also used by gambling establishments to create electronic wagering accounts for individual games, either online or offline.

These methods can be also used by other organizations, agencies, and establishments to enhance their business relationship with a gambling establishment and provide methods to establish a traceable referral relationship between the two organizations.

According to one aspect of the present invention, a method is provided for delivering a game experience, the method comprising acts of providing to a player a gaming extension, the gaming extension having an associated identifier, providing for the player to selectively use the gaming extension with a game provided by a gaming establishment at a gaming location, and responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game, providing an extended gaming experience and/or a modification to one or more rules and/or parameters of the game for the player.

According to one embodiment, the act of providing the gaming extension comprises delivering the identifier to the player though a delivery medium. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of storing the identifier of the gaming extension on a storage medium.
According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of modifying one or more rules of the game for the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of modifying one or more pay tables of the game for the player for use in the game responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game.

According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of providing one or more bet protection options to the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of providing one or more side bet options to the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of converting the game into another type of game for the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game.

According to another embodiment, the delivery medium includes at least one of a group comprising a printed medium, an electronic medium, an element having an RFID chip, and an electronic device having a readable component that stores a representation of the gaming extension. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of associating the identifier of the gaming extension with an identifier of the player. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of activating the gaming extension during play of the game.

According to another embodiment, the act of activating the gaming extension is responsive to an act performed by the player. According to another embodiment, the act performed by the player comprises an act of the player placing the gaming extension on or near a predefined physical location. According to another embodiment, the act of activating the gaming extension comprises at least one of placing the gaming extension on a gaming table in a predefined location, entering identification information into a computer-based device, placing a bet, scanning a medium, moving a GPS-enabled device to a defined location, inserting a card into a reading device, scanning a frequent player identifier, moving an RFID transmitter in proximity to an RFID reader, and scanning a gaming extension with a camera. According to another embodiment, the method further comprises an act of providing one or more online games responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings are not intended to be drawn to scale. In the drawings, each identical or nearly identical component that is illustrated in various figures is represented by a like numeral. For purposes of clarity, not every component may be labeled in every drawing. In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is an illustration of an embodiment of a printed "gaming extension;"
FIG. 2 is an illustration of another embodiment of a printed "gaming extension;"
FIG. 3 is an illustration of an embodiment of a gaming table upon which embodiments of a "gaming extension" may be used;
FIG. 4 is a flow chart of an embodiment of a method of using a "gaming extension;"
FIG. 5 is a flow chart of another embodiment of a method of using a "gaming extension;"
FIG. 6 is a flow chart of another embodiment of a method of using a "gaming extension;" and
FIG. 7 is a flow chart of another embodiment of a method of using a "gaming extension."

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangement of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or of being carried out in various ways. Also, the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. The use of "including," "comprising," "having," "containing," "involving," and variations thereof herein is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items.

Gambling establishments (e.g., casinos, lotteries, or other lawful physical or online gambling establishments) may provide games of chance whose primary appeal is the potential opportunity for players to win money or some other award or prize of value or perceived value. It can be appreciated that gambling establishments may provide many different types of games on the gaming floor that fit the aforementioned description to offer their players variety and choice. It can also be appreciated that not all of these games may receive an equal amount of engagement by players and that not all games may be equally profitable for the gambling
establishment.

Gambling establishment operators may spend a large amount of capital in the effort to attract new players to their gaming establishment. Games and variety in gaming titles may be used as one attractor, but it has historically been a challenge for gambling establishments to build awareness of a gaming title prior to a patron visiting the gambling establishment. It has been equally challenging for gambling establishments to then drive participation at particular titles and measure that engagement.

It can also be appreciated that gaming establishments are often required to wait for game producers and gaming manufactures to produce new and innovative games and systems. The cycle for introducing new games onto a gaming floor can take many years. Because of this, it can be appreciated that gaming establishments may benefit from ways to immediately extend or enhance lower performing games to facilitate a highest level of engagement and return on a regular basis.

It can also be appreciated that new games, when they ultimately debut on the floor of the gaming establishment after a lengthy development cycle, may require a significant amount of awareness, marketing, and education to establish value and efficacy. Players may be intimidated by new game rules and paradigms and may need a significant amount of exposure to the new game to feel comfortable enough to place a bet.

It can be appreciated that gambling establishments may benefit from new and innovative ways to attract new players, drive players at particular games on the gaming floor, educate players to new games, keep players engaged in these games for an extended period of time, extend and enhance these games in an integrated way to provide a greater level of excitement, and evoke positive emotions and experiences that ultimately promote higher durations of engagement and play.

In one aspect of this invention, a "gaming extension" containing an index or identifier, is produced by a system, stored on a storage medium, and given or delivered to a player though a delivery mechanism. The term "gaming extension" as used herein is used both to refer to a game enhancement that may be provided to a player and to refer to a physical or electronic embodiment of a medium or of information that may be provided to and which may be used by a player to active the game enhancement.

Aspects and embodiments of the present invention may be used in conjunction with the methods and apparatus disclosed in co-pending U.S. Application Serial No. 11/001,775, titled
"METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONDUCTING A GAME OF CHANCE," filed on November 30, 2004, of which application is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety and in U.S. Application Serial No. 11/840,541, titled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING PLAYER INCENTIVES," filed on August 17, 2007, of which application is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

For example, a player may be provided with a "gaming extension," which in some embodiments may be in the form of a physical card, for example a thermal printed card. An embodiment of a physical "gaming extension" card 100 is illustrated in FIG. 1. The card may include an area where there is printed a title 110 for the "gaming extension," a description of a feature 120 of the enhancement represented by the card, an image 130, for example an image of a dragon or any other image desired, as an identifier, an area including descriptive text instructions 140, a bar coded index 160 and/or a QR code 150 (a quick response code, which may be a two-dimensional bar code or matrix code). In another embodiment, illustrated in FIG. 2, the "gaming extension" card may include a magnetic index-encoded strip 170 and/or a visibly discernable identification or serial number 180, which may include alphanumeric symbols and/or non-alphanumeric symbols, or any other visual indication. Embodiments of the "gaming extension" card may have a serial number, identifier, or other information encoded thereon in any method that may be known in the art or that may be developed, including, for example, optical encoding (e.g., a hologram or digital code) or encoding on an integrated semiconductor chip (e.g., a flash memory or RFID chip). Embodiments of the "gaming extension" card are not limited to any particular method or structure for information storage or retrieval.

In another aspect of the invention, a game and game rules may be extended to include the use of the "gaming extension" during play of the game, to extend and enhance play of the game for players who have the "gaming extension." The "gaming extension" may be utilized with casino games such as blackjack, Pai Gow poker, slots, craps, or any other physical or electronic wagering or non-wagering game of skill or chance.

For example, a game, such as, but not limited to Pai Gow Poker, may be extended to have an additional area placed on the table for the activation of the "gaming extension." As illustrated in FIG. 3, a gaming table 200 may include, in addition to the usual indicators and markings used on gaming tables, an area 210 for the placement of a "gaming extension" card. The gaming table 200 may also include a bonus bet area 220 which may be used to place a
bonus bet which may be allowed during the use of the "gaming extension." A player can then take a "gaming extension" card and use it in conjunction with, or as an indicator of an activation of an extension of the Pai Gow gaming experience, by placing the "gaming extension" card on the designated area of the table to activate the card in the game. By "activating" the "gaming extension" during play, the player then becomes eligible for new game rules, which when applied, engage the player in new and extended gaming experiences.

Use of the "gaming extension" may provide one or more gaming enhancements and/or modifications to the rules or other aspects or parameters of a game for a player. For example, use of the "gaming extension" may modify a pay table or provide a player with an increased award upon winning a game instance. Use of the "gaming extension" may provide a player with a bonus upon the occurrence of some event, for example, the dealing of two or more cards with a same numerical value or suit, or a particular defined card or type of card during a card game such as blackjack, Spanish 21, or Pai Gow Poker. Use of the "gaming extension" may provide a player with an opportunity to utilize amended game rules, for example to swap one or more undesirable cards during a card game such as blackjack or Pai Gow Poker or one or more symbols in a slot machine game, or to place an additional bonus bet, for example to place an additional bet after the dealing of one or more cards during play of a card game. Use of the "gaming extension" may provide a player with an opportunity to use a form of gaming insurance, for example to decrease potential losses during a hand of a card game by 50% or more. Use of the "gaming extension" may provide a player with an opportunity to modify game rules during play of a game, for example to modify a game of blackjack from following standard blackjack rules to a game following the rules of a game of Spanish 21 during play of the game.

As will be discussed in further detail below, numerous mechanisms for recognizing a "gaming extension" card may be built into the gaming table. For example, the gaming table 200 may include an RFID reader to read an RFID chip embedded in a "gaming extension" card or a magnetic or optical reader to read magnetically or optically encoded information from a "gaming extension" card. In some embodiments the gaming table may include, for example, a manual input or an optical or electronic reader to receive or read information that may be encoded in a non-physical "gaming extension," for example a "gaming extension" in the form of an electronic image or code downloaded into a player's cell phone, PDA, or other electronic device, or simply known to the player. In other embodiments a dealer at a gaming table and/or
a pit boss may acknowledge and/or verify the use of a "gaming extension" by a player and provide the player with a gaming enhancement.

An embodiment of a method of using a "gaming extension" is illustrated in the flowchart of FIG. 4. In act 310, a player receives a "gaming extension." The player may receive the gaming extension in the form of a physical card, or as discussed in further detail below, may receive the "gaming extension" electronically. The player may then visit a gaming establishment, for example a physical gambling establishment or an online gaming website, and proceed to activate the "gaming extension" (act 320). Activation of the "gaming extension" may be performed in various ways. For example, in some embodiments, the player may activate a "gaming extension" by placing a "gaming extension" card on a designated area of a table at which a game is played. In other embodiments, the player may activate a "gaming extension" by providing information encoded on or in or printed on the "gaming extension" to a dealer, or to an electronic system associated with a gaming table, device, or website. For example, the player may insert the "gaming extension" into a ticket reader associated with a gaming table or device, may provide for a bar code on the "gaming extension" to be scanned at a gaming table or device, may provide for an RFID chip associated with the "gaming extension" to be read at a gaming table or device, may enter or otherwise provide an identifier associated with the "gaming extension" at a gaming table, device, or website, or may activate the "gaming extension" in other ways as described further below.

In some embodiments the "gaming extension" may remain activated for only a single game instance, for example, a single hand at a blackjack or Pai Gow Poker table, or a single pull of a slot machine. In other embodiments the "gaming extension" may remain activated for a defined period of time or number of game instances, for example for a defined number of hands of blackjack or Pai Gow Poker, a defined number of pulls of a slot machine, or a defined amount of time of game play. In some embodiments, the defined number of game instances or defined amount of gaming time may be split across multiple gaming sessions. In some embodiments the "gaming extension" becomes void after the defined amount of game instances have been played or the defined amount of time has elapsed. In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" must be activated for each individual game instance, and in others may remain activated for multiple game instances until a player decides to de-activate it.

After the player activates the "gaming extension" (or chooses not to activate it), the game starts (act 330). One or more game turns or instances, e.g., hands of a card game or pulls
of a slot machine, may then be played by the player (act 340), during which, if the player had activated the "gaming extension" extended or modified gaming rules or parameters associated with the "gaming extension" may be applied to the game for the player (act 350). The player may win or lose a game turn (act 360) and proceed to play an additional game turn or a new game. It should be understood that the acts in the flowchart of FIG. 4 (as well as those of FIGS. 5-7, discussed below) may be performed in different orders, and one or more acts may be deleted or added. For example, in some embodiments of the method of FIG. 4, the player may activate the "game extension" (act 320) subsequent to beginning a game, or between game turns.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be used by a player in conjunction with the extension of a gaming experience on the floor of the gambling establishment, for example at slot machines or other floor games, with any one or more or any alternate or additional methods or apparatus for recognizing or reading information from the "gaming extension" described above included in the slot machines or other floor games, to enhance the game play.

In one example, a game such as, but not limited to, Pai Gow Poker, may be extended to have an additional area printed on the table for the activation of the "gaming extension." Rules may be modified or extended for the Pai Gow game so that when the "gaming extension" is activated, a player may be eligible for potentially winning a monetary bonus when a card is dealt to the player that contains the same identifier as the "gaming extension." For the sake of this example, if the player activates a "gaming extension" with a Pai Gow Bonus Dragon card, such as that illustrated in FIG. 1 or FIG. 2, then when the player is dealt a Pai Gow hand with the Pai Gow Bonus Dragon printed on one of the cards, if the player wins the hand, they win the value described on the "gaming extension." For instance, if the "gaming extension" has "2x payout" printed on the card, then under the circumstances described herein, if the player were to have their Pai Gow Bonus Dragon "gaming extension" activated, the player has been dealt a card with an Pai Gow Bonus Dragon and the player wins their hand, then the player wins 2x the total winnings for the hand.

In some embodiments of the invention, the "gaming extension" is provided to the player on a printed medium. For example, the "gaming extension" may be printed on a piece of paper, on an index card, a printed advertisement, a lottery or promotional scratch ticket, a terminal-based lottery ticket, such as a "Powerball" ticket, a printed coupon or other printable
medium and delivered to the player by the gaming establishment in person or through postal mail. In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be electronically delivered to a player, for example, through e-mail or by downloading or viewing on or from a web site, and then printed by the player for use at a gaming establishment.

In one embodiment, the "gaming extension" is printed on a well-known Ticket-In, Ticket-Out (TITO) ticket, by a gaming device, kiosk, or other printing device within or external to a gaming establishment. For example, in one embodiment, a "gaming extension" may be printed via a TITO printer attached to an electronic gaming machine, e.g., a slot machine, prior to, during, or after a player plays the electronic game.

In another embodiment, the "gaming extension" is printed on a plastic card. The plastic gaming extension card may contain for example, a magnetic strip, printed bar code, RFID chip, alphanumeric indicator, optical encoding area, or other information storage mechanism which may include an identifier of the "gaming extension."

In other embodiments of the invention, the "gaming extension" may be a printed medium with a printable surface that also contains an embedded RFD chip or an electronic device that contains an embedded cell phone transmitter and/or receiver or GPS device as a component.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be delivered to the player though an electronic medium and received online by, but not limited to, an electronic application. For example, the "gaming extension" may be delivered to the player and received online by, but not limited to, an application on an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, "smart" phone, or personal computer, though an online mechanism such as the internet, a private network, an open wireless network or a proprietary wireless network. The player can then print the "gaming extension" though a connected printer, or store the extension on a remote or local digital storage medium for later use.

A method of using an electronically delivered "gaming extension" is illustrated in FIG. 5. In act 410 a player visits a website. The website may be one associated with a gaming establishment, or may be associated with an affiliate of the gaming establishment or a third party which may supply "gaming extensions." At the web site, the player may perform an action, such as playing an online game, entering registration information, or simply requesting a "gaming extension." A digital "gaming extension" may then be revealed or delivered to the player, e.g., revealed on the website or e-mailed to the player. The "gaming extension" may
include a code that the player may record or may be an image that the player may print (e.g.,
using the player's computer printer) or store (act 420) in, for example, a cell phone, PDA, or
other portable electronic device, or may be in the form of a physical card, a code, or electronic
device that the player may receive upon visiting a gaming establishment. The player may then
visit a gaming establishment, e.g., a physical or online casino or other gaming establishment
(act 440) and proceed to activate the "gaming extension" and play a game in acts 450, 460,
470, 480, and 490, in a similar manner as described above for acts 320, 330, 340, 350, and 360
of the method illustrated in the flowchart of FIG. 4.

It should be appreciated that this embodiment can be applied to the previously
described aspects, embodiments, and examples, and that this embodiment improves upon and
increases the existing benefits of these other aspects, embodiments, and examples.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be delivered directly to a cell
phone or smart phone through, but not limited to, a wireless network via a standard protocol
such as SMS, MMS, HTTP or TCP/IP.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may exist in electronic form, for
example, in a database, and may only be made available to a player when they "reveal" the
gaming extension using a mechanism made available on an electronic device.

For example, a player can use a mobile device with a camera to take a picture of a QR
code, conventional bar code, or other identifier to reveal the "gaming extension." According to
one embodiment, a unique identifier may be associated with the "gaming extension" and a
unique identifier may be associated with a player. In some embodiments, a uniquely identified
gaming extension may be associated with a particular player. Because of this feature, the
gaming extension may be applied to one or many gaming experiences in a gambling
establishment or in one or many electronic gaming experiences.

In another embodiment, the "gaming extension" may exist in electronic form, for
example in a database, and may only be made available to a player when the player wins, is
awarded, or "reveals" the gaming extension online. For example, a player can visit a website
and play an electronic game. During the play of the electronic game, the "gaming extension"
may be won, awarded, or "revealed" by the player. Using a unique identifier associated with
the "gaming extension" and a unique identifier associated with the player, the gaming
extension may then be associated with that particular player. The gaming extension can then
be applied to one or many gaming experiences on a floor of a gambling establishment or in one or many electronic gaming experiences online.

It should be appreciated that this embodiment can be applied to the previously described aspects, embodiments and examples, and that this embodiment improves upon and increases the existing benefits of these other aspects, embodiments and examples.

In another embodiment, a "gaming extension" may be won, awarded, or "revealed," in either electronic or physical form, by a player playing an electronic game, e.g., video poker or slots, in a gaming establishment. In a further embodiment, the "gaming extension" may be won, awarded, or "revealed," in either electronic or physical form, by a player playing a physical game, e.g., blackjack, roulette, craps, or poker, in a gaming establishment. The "gaming extension" may be won, awarded, or "revealed" as a prize in a game, or as a reward for performing an act, for example, for playing for a certain amount of time, and/or wagering a certain amount of money. In some embodiments, a player may trade casino "comp points" for a "gaming extension."

In some embodiments of the invention, an index or identifier is printed or encoded on the "gaming extension" to identify the "gaming extension" and to also provide the ability to associate the "gaming extension" with other data elements, for example with a particular player, a particular gaming establishment, a particular source or sponsorship identifier, or a particular type of game.

In some embodiments, the index or identifier may be a unique index or identifier, for example, a unique alpha-numeric string.

In other embodiments, there may be a specific inventory for the index or identifier of the "gaming extension." For example, the index or identifier may the image of a dragon and the "game extension" may be a defined extension of the game Pai Gow Poker. There may be a specific number of these Dragon identifiers in circulation, for example, 10 or 100. In some embodiments, a specified number of new "gaming extension" identifiers, manifested physically, electronically or both, encoding a previously used defined game extension, and/or a previously unused game extension, may be created and/or distributed by a gaming establishment or other party in a given time period, for example, per day. In other embodiments, new "gaming extensions" may be created and/or distributed as previously distributed "gaming extensions" are used and become void to keep the number of "gaming extensions" in circulation substantially the same over time.
In various embodiments, the index or identifier printed or encoded on the "gaming extension" may be a website URL (uniform resource locator), may be encoded on magnetic tape affixed to a plastic card, may be a sequence of numerical, non-numerical, or alphabetic characters, may be a bar code, and/or may be a QR code.

In other embodiments, the index or identifier printed or encoded on the "gaming extension" may be symbolic information, that when read and processed by one or a series of devices, processors, and/or software applications, may identify the index or identifier associated with the "gaming extension."

It should be appreciated that these embodiments may be applied to the previously described aspects, embodiments, and examples, and that these embodiments may improve upon and increase the existing benefits of these other aspects, embodiments, and examples.

In some embodiments, during the play of a game, the "game extension" is activated by a pre-designated action taken by the player. Then during play, the index or identifier on the "gaming extension" may be compared to an index or identifier in other play components of the game. If the index or identifier matches the index or identifier associated with the "gaming extension," then a predefined event occurs that extends the gaming experience, for example by modifying a pay table for the player to increase potential winnings or reduce potential losses by the player.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be activated by a player placing the "gaming extension" on a pre-defined physical location. For example, the "gaming extension" may be placed by the player on a gaming table within a space outlined for the placement of the "gaming extension."

In another embodiment, the "gaming extension" may only be activated when a player places a bet and performs one or many other predefined actions and/or when a player completes one, many, a sequence, or a combination of predefined and configured actions, events, or tasks.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may only activated when a player inserts the printed medium into a scanner device, such as, but not limited to a TITO reader, a bar code scanner, a magnetic strip reader, or a player card reader. For example, a player may activate the "gaming extension" by inserting it into a player card reader on a gaming device. A method in accordance with this embodiment is illustrated in the flowchart of FIG. 7. A player may approach a gaming machine, e.g., a video poker or slot machine, and insert the "gaming
extension" into a card reader associated with the gaming machine (act 710). The gaming machine may then proceed to authenticate the gaming extension, for example by comparing an indicator of the "gaming extension" to a database present within the gaming machine, or a database accessed over an electronic network (act 720). If the "gaming extension" is found to be valid and useable (e.g., not void) the use of the "gaming extension" on the gaming machine may be approved and extended game rule(s) or other extensions of game play on the gaming machine associated with the "gaming extension" may be activated for the player (act 730).

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be activated by a player visiting a particular location with a GPS enabled device.

In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be outfitted with an RFID transmitter or transceiver and may activated by placing the "gaming extension" in proximity to an RFID receiver or transceiver. The RFID signal may be interpreted by the receiver, transmitted, and processed by a series of devices, processors, and/or software applications. The "gaming extension" may be activated if the data transmitted by the RFID transmitter is evaluated to be valid.

In another embodiment, the "gaming extension" may be activated by placing the "gaming extension" in front of a camera that is connected via a network to a series of devices, processors, and/or software. The image from the camera may be encoded, transmitted, decoded, and interpreted. The "gaming extension" may be activated if the data encoded, transmitted, decoded and interpreted is evaluated to be valid.

In some embodiments of the invention, the "gaming extension" may serve as a unique identifier for a player within the context of a particular game. For example, many gambling establishments run player clubs to create player loyalty. To track play, the gambling establishments issue player cards and card IDs to uniquely identify players within the player club. In this example, the "gaming extension" may serve as the player identity and tracking element for the player's loyalty within the context of a particular game, such as Pai Gow Poker.

In other embodiments of this invention, a player may visit a website and enter the index or identifier on the "game extension" into a web-based form to register the "game enhancement" for play with an online or offline game experience.

In another embodiment of this invention, a player may send the index or identifier on the "gaming extension" via an electronic medium to a server, where it is interpreted by a device, processor, and/or software application to register the "gaming extension" for play with
an online or offline game experience. In other embodiments, the index or identifier may be
sent via a text message to a specific phone number or text message short code.

In other embodiments of this invention, activation of the "gaming extension" may tie
the play at the gambling establishment with online and/or web-based play. For example, when
a player activates their "gaming extension" during play at a gambling establishment, this may
enable additional extensions, features and play enhancements with the online play of a
particular game, set of games, or an online profile. For instance, a player may swipe their
player card and then the "gaming extension" at a gaming machine to enable their "gaming
extension." Once enabled, content may be available though an online website may be
"unlocked" for the player. When the player logs onto the online website, they may be
permitted to engage and interact with said content.

It should be appreciated that these embodiments can be applied to the previously
described aspects, embodiments, and examples, and that these embodiments may improve
upon and increase the benefits of these other aspects, embodiments, and examples.

In other embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be one in a series or collection of
"gaming extensions" and players may add additional rules and/or enhancements to a game by
collecting and activating the series or collection.

In other embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be linked to other "gaming
extensions" through a database or other data storage medium. When activated in a particular
group, sequence or collection, the "gaming extension" may provide additional enhancements
and game extensions for the collective group of "gaming extensions." For example, a number
of different players may collect different, but related "gaming extensions" through a social
network, such as Facebook.com. Players who obtain the related "gaming extensions" may visit
a bank of slot machines together and activate the "gaming extension" during the same game
session, at the same location, or during the same time to extend and enhance the gaming
experience. In one example, a player may scan their "gaming extensions" at a participating
bank of slot machines to unlock a competitive bonus mode, where the machine allows the
player at the bank of machines to compete with other players who have also scanned their
"gaming extensions" at the participating bank of slot machines for an enhanced payout or other
benefit, for example, IOx the top prize, during a community bonus round or other defined time
period.
In another embodiment of this invention, the gaming extension may be linked to one, all, or a specific group of games, creating a game extension that spans multiple gaming activities. For example, one game extension may serve as an enhancement for all terminal based lottery games, such as Powerball and Mega Millions. As another example, one game extension may serve as an enhancement for a specific bank of slot machines, or a specific set of machines developed by a specific manufacturer.

In another embodiment of this invention, activation of a gaming extension may tie the player to a web based "rewards" or "loyalty" club. For example, when a player activates their "gaming extension" during play at a gambling establishment, this may enable additional extensions, features and play enhancements with the "rewards" and loyalty club website. For instance, a player may enter in their account information or identification on a website and then enter or activate the "gaming extension" to enable the "gaming extension." Once enabled, content made available though an online website may be "unlocked" for the player, additional awards may be provided to the player, or additional game play may be made to the player on the web or online system.

In another embodiment of this invention, the index or identifier printed or encoded on the "gaming extension" can be tied to an account created online and used as a way to track play by players who are not tracked as a member of a gambling establishment's player club. For example, many gambling establishment operators are challenged by the fact that groups of players that play at their gambling establishments do not sign up for the player club. Thus, the gambling establishment operator has no way to measure the lifetime value of that patron. An online experience, such as a website can be used as a gateway to register these players. During the online experience and once the player has completed a registration process, the player can be delivered a "gaming extension" where the identifier or index associated with the "gaming extension" is also associated with their account ID. When the player uses the "gaming extension," the index or identifier tied to the "gaming extension" and the account ID is interpreted, processed and recognized by a series of devices, processors, networks, and/or applications. Once the recognition has taken place, the use of the "gaming extension" by that particular web account holder may then be recorded.

In some embodiments, an independent party, such as a junket operator, a hotel, a restaurant, a taxi owner, or other business can be used as a mechanism to distribute the "gaming extensions" as a way to create a referral-based business relationship with a gaming
establishment. To facilitate this, an index or identifier on the "gaming extension" may be associated with a referral ID that represents the business distributing the "gaming extension." For example, a hotel can give out "gaming extensions" for particular games on the gaming establishment floor. When the "gaming extension" is activated by a player with the gaming establishment, though a series of devices, processors, networks, and/or applications, the hotel may be credited for a referral.

In some embodiments, an electronic wagering account that allows for credits and withdrawals may be associated with a "gaming extension" to allow credits from the account to be played with a particular game or "gaming extension." For example, as illustrated in the flow chart of FIG. 6, a player may visit or register online at a website (act 510) and establish a wagering account. The player may then credit the wagering account (act 520) by, for example depositing a check, electronically transferring money to the account, or tying the account to a bank account, debit or credit card. The wagering account can then be tied to a "gaming extension" for a particular game. When the "gaming extension" is delivered to the player, the index or identifier on the "gaming extension" may also be associated, through a database, to the wagering account. The player may then visit a casino (act 530) or any other physical or electronic gaming establishment to play the game. When the "gaming extension" is activated with the gaming establishment (act 540), it can then be used to wager either in the context of the general game or in a game with parameters modified for the player in accordance with a set of rules associated with the "gaming extension." For example, the game may begin (act 550) and the player may place a wager (act 560) by using cash, chips, an identifier of the "gaming extension," or by any other method. A turn of the game is then played (act 570), during which, in some embodiments, one or more extended game rules may be applied (act 580). The player may win or lose the game turn (act 590) and the player's wagering account linked to the identifier of the "gaming extension" may be credited with the player's winnings or debited by the amount of the player's losses (act 600). In some embodiments, the wagering account may be credited or debited after each game turn, and in other embodiments, after a series of game turns, for example after the player has played a certain number of game turns or won or lost a certain amount or more, or once per entry and/or exit from the game. A series of devices, networks, processors, and/or applications may be provided by which the gaming establishment can validate the "gaming extension" and credit or debit the wagering account though the use of the index or identifier of the "gaming extension."
In some embodiments, the "gaming extension" may be tied to a wagering account which may also be associated with a credit account and represent an account for a debit between the player and the gaming establishment. For example, the gaming establishment can issue "gaming extensions" that have a preset amount of wager associated with them. A player may pre-pay for all or a part of the preset amount of wager, or when the preset amount of wager is used, it is then owed by the player to the gaming establishment.

In some embodiments of the invention, a series and/or combination of devices, networks, processors, and/or applications may be provided by which a gaming establishment operator can activate, account for and validate the "gaming extension." A CRM (Customer Relationship Management) facility, which in some embodiments may be online, may be provided that allows the operator the ability to manage accounts associated with all or individual "gaming extensions." An interface may also be provided to allow the operator the ability to create, publish, and deliver new "gaming extensions."

For example, an online system may be used that provides a gaming establishment operator the ability to manage "gaming extensions." For sake of this example, the gaming establishment operator can use, for example, a bar code reader or other information retrieval or transmission device to send an index of a "gaming extension" to a PC, which in turn uses a combination or series of networks, devices, processors, and/or applications to transmit the index to a central server. If the index represents a valid gaming extension, that result may be transmitted to the originating device(s) for display to a user. Additionally, the gaming establishment operator can log into a user account via an online CRM website, where they can view the activity related to all "gaming extensions," edit and manage accounts created online by players using "gaming extensions," as well as create new "gaming extensions" for delivery and use by players. The interface for new "gaming extensions" may allow the user to create and edit all aspects of the "gaming extension," including creative collateral, such as artwork, text copy for display with the "gaming extension," as well as defining rules related to how the "gaming extension" may extend a game. For example, the user may be able to identify that if the identifier on the "gaming extension" matches a similar identifier displayed during the play of the game, then the player receives 2x their original bet.

Having thus described several aspects of at least one embodiment of this invention, it is to be appreciated various alterations, modifications, and improvements will readily occur to those skilled in the art. Such alterations, modifications, and improvements are intended to be...
part of this disclosure, and are intended to be within the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, the foregoing description and drawings are by way of example only.

It should be appreciated that use of the term "gambling establishment" refers to any lawful gambling or gaming establishment, either physical or online or both. The gambling or gaming establishments may offer wagering and/or non-wagering games of skill and/or chance. Physical casinos, Internet casinos, lotteries, racetracks, betting shops, and Internet gaming establishments are common examples of such gambling establishments that are lawful in certain jurisdictions. It can also be appreciated that some gambling establishments may provide gaming as a subset of other offerings or services. For example, a bar or restaurant whose primary business is selling food and drink may also provide Keno gaming. Similarly, a convenience store whose primary business is selling retail items may also sell lottery tickets. It can further be appreciated that all aspects of this invention may be applied to any other entities that represent a lawful gambling or gaming establishment. These gambling or gaming establishments may be accessed at physical locations or online or both.

The term online refers to access of one or more of the invention's components via a computer, phone, handheld device, or similar device. Such online access may occur though the Internet, a private or public computer network, or a similar network.

The term "player club" refers to any grouping of an establishment's patrons that confers some tangible or perceived benefit to the members of the group. For example, such a Players Club may take the form or a mailing list (USPS, email, or other), a loyalty program, an online members-only area, or some other grouping of patrons.

Use of ordinal terms such as "first," "second," "third," "a," "b," "c," etc., in the claims to modify or otherwise identify a claim element does not by itself connote any priority, precedence, or order of one claim element over another or the temporal order in which acts of a method are performed, but are used merely as labels to distinguish one claim element having a certain name from another element having a same name (but for use of the ordinal term) to distinguish the claim elements.
- 20 -

CLAIMS

1. A method for providing a game experience, the method comprising:
   providing to a player a gaming extension, the gaming extension having an
   associated identifier;
   providing for the player to selectively use the gaming extension with a game
   provided by a gaming establishment at a gaming location; and
   responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game,
   modifying a parameter of the game for the player.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of providing the gaming extension
   comprises delivering the identifier to the player though a delivery medium.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of storing the identifier of
   the gaming extension on a storage medium.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of modifying one or more
   rules of the game for the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming
   extension with the game.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of modifying one or more
   pay tables for the player for use in the game responsive to the player selectively using
   the gaming extension with the game.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of providing one or more
   bet protection options to the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming
   extension with the game.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of providing one or more
   side bet options to the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming
   extension with the game.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of converting the game into another type of game for the player responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the delivery medium is selected from the group consisting of a printed medium, an electronic medium, an element having an RFID chip, and an electronic device having a readable component that stores a representation of the gaming extension.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of associating the identifier of the gaming extension with an identifier of the player.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing for the player to activate the gaming extension during play of the game.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the act of activating the gaming extension is responsive to an act performed by the player.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the act performed by the player comprises an act of the player placing the gaming extension on or near a predefined physical location.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the act of activating the gaming extension comprises at least one of:

   placing the gaming extension on a gaming table in a predefined location;
   entering identification information into a computer-based device;
   placing a bet;
   scanning a medium;
   moving a GPS-enabled device to a defined location;
   inserting a card into a reading device;
scanning a frequent player identifier;
moving an RFID transmitter into proximity to an RFID reader; and
scanning a gaming extension with a camera.

15. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act of providing one or more online games responsive to the player selectively using the gaming extension with the game.
Pai Gow Bonus Dragon
2x PAYOUT

Place this Bonus Card on the

*Bonus Card Play Area*

To Activate the Pai Gow Dragon Bonus
During Play of Pai Gow Poker

FIG. 1
Pai Gow Bonus Dragon
2x PAYOUT

Place this Bonus Card on the Bonus Card Play Area
To Activate the Pai Gow Dragon Bonus During Play of Pai Gow Poker

FIG. 2
FIG. 3

Pai Gow Bonus Card

PLACE BONUS CARD HERE
310 Player Receives Gaming Extension

320 Player Activates Gaming Extension

330 Game Starts

340 Game Turn is Played

350 Extended Game Rules are Applied

360 Player Wins/Loses

FIG. 4
410 Player Visits Website

420 Player Receives Gaming Extension

430 Player Prints or Stores Gaming Extension

440 Player Visits Casino

450 Player Activates Gaming Extension

460 Game Starts

470 Game Turn is Played

480 Extended Game Rules are Applied

490 Player Wins/Loses

FIG. 5
510 Player Visits Website

520 Player Credits Account

530 Player Visits Casino

540 Player Activates Gaming Extension

550 Game Starts

560 Player plays Wager

570 Game Turn is Played

580 Extended Game Rules are Applied

590 Player Wins/Loses

600 Wagering Account Credited/Debited

FIG. 6
710
Player Inserts Gaming Extension into Machine Card Reader

720
Gaming Extension Authenticated and Approved

730
Gaming Extension Activated for Machine

FIG. 7
# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

**IPC(8) - A63F 13/00 (201 1.01 )**

USPC - 463/20

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)

**IPC(8) - A63F 9/24, A63F 9/00, A63F 13/00 (201 1.01)**

**USPC - 463/1, 463/16, 463/20**

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

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

Patbase

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 2006/0046836 A1 (WALKER et al) 02 March 2006 (02.03.2006) entire document</td>
<td>1-15</td>
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☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:
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  - "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
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**Date of the actual completion of the international search**

10 February 2011

**Date of mailing of the international search report**

18 FEB 2011

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