A method of playing a video gaming system which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one game; and activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game. A video gaming system is also provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a central processor to display on the video display at least one game, and a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play.
GAMING SYSTEM AND METHOD HAVING PREMIUM PLAY PERIOD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/376,478, entitled Gaming System Having Premium Player Period, filed Apr. 30, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to the field of gaming or gambling, and, in particular, to video gaming devices.

[0003] Gambling or gaming devices have been in use for decades and were originally introduced in the 19th century. A major advancement in technology of gaming devices occurred when microprocessors were introduced in the gaming or gambling field. They were divided into two major segments in their development. One being the mechanical spinning reels and the other being the use of “CRT” displays or animated displays of reels, cards, keno boards, and “21” games. The emergence of such microprocessor devices has opened a vast set of possibilities to gambling device designers. In U.S. Pat. No. 4,095,795, the first microprocessor slot machine is described.

[0004] Another major advancement used microprocessors and a software program to adjust the odds of achieving any particular combination or game outcome. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 4,448,419 describes a mechanical reel slot machine controlled by a microprocessor. The software program allowed for the control of the reels and the varying of odds of achieving any particular combination of symbols. Similarly, U.S. Pat. No. 4,711,451 describes a gambling device using mechanical reels but is controlled by a microprocessor.

[0005] Microprocessors along with the lowering prices of color monitors allowed the expansion of the second largest area of gambling devices. These devices, known as “Video Games” included video slots, 21, bingo, keno, and poker machines. The largest portion of this segment of the gaming field is the video poker machine.

[0006] Development of use of microprocessors in the gaming or gambling fields can be divided into two major segments, first, in mechanical spinning reels and, second, in the use of CRTs, for example, in use of animated displays of reels, cards, keno boards, “21” games, and the like. The emergence of such microprocessor devices has opened a vast set of possibilities to gaming device designers. One such innovation has been to interconnect banks of machines, both locally and over broad geographic areas, with a small percentage of each wager being cumulatively added to a centralized, ever-growing, jackpot. One such arrangement is known as a multi-linked progressive jackpot. Another major advancement using microprocessors involved the use of software to adjust the odds of achieving any particular combination or game outcome.

[0007] In using microprocessors, a random number generator picks numbers representing stop positions, with each physical stop position represented by multiple software stop positions. This was the first use of the “Virtual Reel” type slot machine. This method allowed the standard 20-stop reel to be expanded up to, for example, 512 software stops. Thus, the size of the symbols used on the physical reel could remain the same size while increasing the number used on each reel. Before using microprocessors, when the number of spins on a reel increased, the symbol’s physical size had to decrease because of limitations of the mechanical reel. A method of reel mapping permitted a single machine to act as a single machine, a “multiple stop” machine, or a virtual reel gambling device, thus saving on development costs. Stepper motors now replaced the mechanical reels that had been used for the past eight decades. This innovation allowed designers to have the reels spin in any direction, add reels inside of reels, and expand the number of symbols used on each reel.

[0008] Because virtual reel slot machines obscure the true probability of achieving certain combinations, players tend to choose slot machines according to the size of the jackpots offered without an appreciation of the true probability of hitting a large jackpot. For example, the odds of achieving a giant jackpot in one machine, where the jackpot may be, for example, in the tens of millions of dollars, may be very low. However, to the player, the odds do not seem to be any lower than that for obtaining any other symbol combination. In other words, in virtual reel slot machines, high jackpots may be offered which have a very low probability of being achieved, but the player is often essentially unaware of the true odds of the device.

[0009] In many locations, governmental regulations govern the minimum overall payouts and the cycle size for slot machines because the use of microprocessor technology has permitted the design of slot devices having virtual reels and bonus games, which deprive the player the knowledge of the true odds of a particular symbol appearing on the “win line” on each game. As indicated above, early mechanical slot machines had a finite number of symbols on each reel (usually 20 to 25) and the odds of each symbol appearing was relatively easily discernible.

[0010] Gaming devices generally generate revenue in accordance with the following equation:

\[ \text{Revenue} = \text{House Edge} \times \text{Hours Played} \times \text{Plays Per Hour} \]

[0011] Of the above variables, two, Hours Played and Plays Per Hour, are directly controlled by the player, and are thus difficult for a casino to change. House Edge, is directly controlled by a casino but is nonetheless difficult to change for regulatory reasons. In addition, increasing the House Edge can affect other variables to actually decrease revenue, as is described below.

[0012] Players are primarily concerned with finding a gaming device with a low “House Edge,” also known as “hold percentage.” This is the average percentage of wagered money which is kept by the gaming device per game. Likewise, players are primarily concerned with finding a gaming device with a high “payout percentage.” The payout percentage is 100% minus the House Edge, which equals the average percentage of waged money which is returned to a player per game. Low hold percentages (i.e., high payout percentages) are a significant factor in attracting players to one casino rather than another. Accordingly, many casinos advertise that they have gaming devices with very high payout percentages. Although a high payout percentage (low House Edge) may attract players, it also results in lower revenue. Casinos, of course, would prefer higher revenue,
and may increase the House Edge to increase revenue. Paradoxically, increasing the House Edge does not always increase revenue. The House Edges of gaming devices are often displayed in publications or on the gaming device itself. Many players will avoid gaming devices that they believe to have low payout percentages, or high House Edges. Thus, if the House Edge is increased on certain gaming devices, the Hours Played or Plays Per Hour on those gaming devices may decrease, and revenues may likewise decrease.

[0013] In addition, when a casino wants to adjust the hold percentage of a slot machine, state and/or local regulations may require that the machine be removed from the casino floor, adjusted accordingly, then reactivated. Accordingly, some casinos may be reluctant to increase the House Edge of gaming devices in an attempt to increase revenues from those devices.

[0014] Increasing the Hours Played is difficult to achieve because a casino cannot easily modify player behavior. For example, to increase the Hours Played, casinos typically remove clocks from the view of players, make the seats and playing area more comfortable, and serve free drinks in an attempt to modify player behavior. Additionally, the gaming devices themselves have become increasingly more entertaining in order to entice the player to play longer. Such measures may increase the Hours Played to a certain extent, but do not necessarily increase the Hours Played significantly or at all. Increasing the Plays Per Hour (speed of game play) is likewise difficult. Efforts to increase this factor include providing a spin button, rather than a handle, on some slot machines, allowing the player to initiate each game quickly. In addition, some slot machines have faster stopping reels, which end each game more quickly. Furthermore, a group of gaming machines may be in communication over a network, allowing each of a group of players to influence the movement of an object in a race, such as a horse race or car race. Such a racing game may make some players play faster than they would have. However, other players view such a game as annoyingly complicated and do not participate.

[0015] Casinos may also sponsor tournaments, in which the first player to win a jackpot or reach a certain score wins a prize. Casinos may also organize player clubs, in which players receive points for the number of plays or amounts wagered. Such points can be redeemed for goods and services once the player has reached a certain threshold. Casinos may also offer players the chance to win a “progressive jackpot”, which increases over time and is typically available to all players in a casino playing slot machines. When a progressive jackpot reaches a large dollar amount, players typically play rapidly in an attempt to win that jackpot. Since each player knows that all other players have a chance to win, they play faster in an attempt to increase their chances of winning the jackpot. However, other players are not attracted by such casino promotions, and their playing behavior is thus unaffected by the promotions.

[0016] In summary, it would be advantageous to increase a player’s attraction to a gaming device.

[0017] All references cited herein are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0018] The present invention is directed to a method of playing a video gaming system that includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one game, and activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play.

[0019] The step of activating the premium event initiator may initiate the premium play period for a single game play or a designated number of additional game plays. The premium play period may have an increased payout percentage and corresponding increased bet size as compared to times other than the premium play period.

[0020] In a more specific preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of playing a video gaming system is provided which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one game, activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play, inputting at least one additional credit for each game play during the premium play period, and increasing a payout percentage during the premium play period.

[0021] In another preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of playing a video slot gaming system is provided which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one slot game, activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one slot game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play, inputting the at least one additional credit per game play, and changing at least one slot reel during the premium play period to increase a payout percentage.

[0022] In yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of playing a video slot gaming system is provided which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one slot game, activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one slot game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play, inputting the at least one additional credit per game play during the premium play period, and converting at least one group of indicia in the slot display that was a losing group of indicia prior to the premium play period to be a winning group of indicia.

[0023] In still another preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of playing a video slot gaming system is provided which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one slot game having a plurality of slot symbols displayed, activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one slot game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play, and retaining at least one slot symbol in displayed position during all game plays of the premium play period.

[0024] In yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of playing a video gaming system is provided which includes the steps of inputting at least one credit, displaying at least one game, activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play, and increasing speed of every game played during the premium play period relative to play at other times.
A video gaming system is also provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game, and a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play.

The premium event initiator may be adapted to initiate the premium play period for a single game play or for a designated number of additional game plays. The premium event initiator may be adapted to initiate the premium play period having an increased payout percentage and increased bet size compared to times other than during the premium event period.

In another embodiment of the present system, a video gaming system is provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a first pay table associated with a first bet amount, a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein the second bet amount is higher the first bet amount, a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game, and a premium event initiator adapted to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play wherein the premium play period uses the second pay table.

In yet another embodiment of the present system, a video slot gaming system is provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a first pay table associated with a first bet amount, a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein the second bet amount is higher the first bet amount, and a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one slot game. The premium play period is adapted to change at least one of virtual reel of the video slot display to increase a payout percentage.

In still another embodiment of the present system, a video gaming system is provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a first pay table associated with a first bet amount, a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein the second bet amount is higher the first bet amount, and a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game. The premium play period includes an increased bet amount and the second pay table has an increased payout percentage relative to the first pay table.

In another embodiment of the present system, a video gaming system is provided which includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a first pay table associated with a first bet amount, a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein the second bet amount is higher the first bet amount, and a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game. A premium event initiator initiates a premium play period for at least one game play. The premium play period retains at least one symbol in displayed position during the premium play period.

Finally, in another embodiment of the present system, a video gaming system is provided that includes a video display, an input device for receipt of credits, a first pay table associated with a first bet amount, a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein the second bet amount is higher the first bet amount, a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game, and a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play. The premium play is played at an increased speed relative to play at other times.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be described in conjunction with the following drawing, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a simplified drawing of a slot machine in accordance with one preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to increasing the Plays Per Hour, as described above, of a gaming device, and thereby significantly increase the revenue to the owner of the gaming device. Players typically do not consider the number of games played on a machine, but instead attempt to find a gaming device with a low House Edge, as described above, that is easy to play. Accordingly, a gaming device that is played rapidly will typically not discourage players, and can thus generate more revenue by providing an incentive to play faster and for longer periods of time without tiring arms or fingers. Such a gaming device may be played for more games so that more revenue will be generated than, for example, a higher payout percentage will create. By offering an incentive to play more games, a gaming device will typically be played for more games over a period of time than those devices that do not provide such an incentive. The casino can in turn derive greater revenue from the gaming device, even though the player is afforded a higher payout percentage.

In a typical reel-type slot machine, a payout of coins or credits is made to a player whenever certain combinations of symbols are displayed on the reels relative to a payline. To accommodate various players, each machine will accept a certain minimum wager amount per activation of the reels. For example, a player willing to bet larger amounts will choose a machine having $1.00 or $5.00 as its minimum wager amount instead of a $0.05 or $0.25 machine. Also, casino operators will adjust the total game payout percentage up or down based on the profitability that the operator of the gaming machine desires and whatever regulations are imposed upon the operator by the gaming authority that regulates the use of the gaming machine. Generally, the operator will set the payout percentage for each machine based on the minimum wager amount such that the payout percentages increase as the minimum wager...
amount increases. For example, the payout percentage of a five dollar machine will be higher than that of a nickel machine.

[0037] Generally, the popularity of such gaming machines with players is dependent on the intrinsic entertainment value of the machine relative to other available gaming options and the likelihood (or perceived likelihood) of winning money at the machine. One concept, which has been successfully employed to enhance the entertainment value of a game, is the concept of a secondary or bonus game, which may be played in conjunction with a basic game. The bonus game may comprise any type of game, either similar to or completely different from the basic game, which is entered upon the occurrence of a selected event or outcome of the basic game.

[0038] Referring now to the drawing, there is shown in FIG. 1 a simplified schematic drawing of a gaming machine 10 in accordance with one preferred embodiment of the present invention. The gaming machine 10 includes a video display 12, an input device 14 (or devices) for receipt of credits, for example, in the form of currency, token, card, biometric and the like, as well known in the art of gaming machines. The gaming machine 10 further includes a central processor 16 adapted to display on the video display at least one game. The central processor 16 has an associated first pay table and associated with a first bet amount. The central processor 16 is capable of changing to at least one additional pay table associated with a respective additional bet amount. Finally, the gaming machine 10 has a “premium button” 18 to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play.

[0039] As indicated, the present invention is directed to a video gaming machine 10 having a special premium play period. The premium play period is activated either by a player (using, for example, an activation button, hereinafter, the “premium button” 18) or an event (for example, a predetermined number of plays, a win of a certain amount, or a certain minimum plays per hour. This “event” is hereinafter called the “activation event” which is activated by a “premium event initiator” (i.e., the button 18 or event). The overall goal here is to motivate a player to increase his or her Plays Per Hour and bet size.

[0040] The activation button 18 or other actuation mechanism or icon is incorporated onto the gaming machine 10 to begin a special game play and enables, for example, one or more of the following features for a designated number of games:

[0041] (a) a bonus is awarded for that game play or for a designated number of additional games;

[0042] (b) a virtual reel is changed for that game play or a predetermined series of wagered games;

[0043] (c) the denomination (coin value) of the machine is changed for that game play or a predetermined series of wagered games;

[0044] (d) certain losing groups or series of losing combinations of symbols are considered winning combinations or series of combinations if contained within the predetermined series of wagered games;

[0045] (e) a bonus is awarded for that game play or for a predetermined series of wagered games and groups of indicia from the bonus game are retained in position after that game play or a predetermined series of wagered games;

[0046] (f) the speed and pace of the game is altered or altered for a predetermined series of wagered games; and

[0047] (g) the wager is altered for a predetermined series of wagered games.

[0048] Each of these features will be individually addressed below.

[0049] First, when a player hits the premium button 18 or the activation event takes place (as described above), premium play occurs for a single game play or for a designated number of additional game plays. Depending upon the gaming machine, this may be designed or set to occur for a single game play or, for example, the next five game plays, or, for example, the next one minute, etc. This may be designed into the software of the gaming machine. In this first type of premium play, a bonus is awarded to the player. For example, the bonus may be a credit played back to the player. Substantially any type of bonus known in gaming may be used. However, if the bonus creates a higher payout percentage, a greater bet amount is required.

[0050] Second, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, a virtual reel is changed for that game play or a predetermined series of wagered games. The changed virtual reel increases the payout percentage, but also requires, for example, a relatively higher bet size. For example, the changed virtual reel may be a slot reel and may include a greater quantity of “bars” such that the odds of achieving a winning combination involving bars increases. This may require, for example, a bet of double the number of credits that the player used on the previous, nonpremium play.

[0051] Third, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, the denomination (coin value) of the machine is changed for that game play or a predetermined series of wagered games. For example, if a player is playing on a one dollar per play machine, hitting the activation button increases the bet to five dollars per play.

[0052] Fourth, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, for a single game play or a predetermined series of wagered games, certain losing groups or series of losing groups of indicia are considered winning combinations or series of combinations, thereby increasing the odds or perceived odds of winning. Bet amounts and/or payout percentages are adjusted accordingly. For example, if hitting two “lemons” on a slot game had previously been associated with no win, during the premium play period, a play achieving two lemons may win five credits per credit bet. Again, during the premium play period, an increased bet of, for example, a minimum bet of $5.00 is required rather than a minimum bet of $1.00 during nonpremium play.

[0053] Fifth, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, a bonus game, as well known in the art, is awarded for a single game play or for a predetermined series of wagered games. For example, in one type of bonus game, groups of indicia from the bonus game may be retained in position after that game play or a
predetermined series of wagered games. This may effectively increase the payout percentage, but also may require a higher bet amount, as described above. Generally, any type of bonus game may be used here. If play of the bonus game is controlled by the player, that is, if play of the bonus game is a choice made by the player, an increased bet is required if the payout percentage increases during the premium play period.

[0054] Sixth, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, the speed and pace of the game or predetermined series of wagered games is altered. For example, when a player hits the premium button, the maximum Plays Per Hour increases, for example, to double the normal. For example, if it typically takes four seconds to play one game, hitting the premium button decreases the time to play one game to two seconds. This may occur, for example, by having the slot gaming machine’s virtual reels stop in a faster amount of time.

[0055] Seventh, when a player hits the premium button or the activation event takes place, the wager is altered for a predetermined series of wagered games. Here, for example, when a player hits the premium button, the wager for a single game may be increased from one dollar to five dollars, with an accompanying increase in payout percentage to, for example, close to but less than 100 percent.

[0056] While the invention has been described in detail and with reference to specific examples thereof, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that various changes and modifications can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope thereof.

What is claimed is:
1. A method of playing a video gaming system, comprising the steps of:
   (a) inputting at least one credit;
   (b) displaying at least one game; and
   (c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a single game play.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period having an increased payout percentage and wherein the method further includes the step of increasing a bet size as compared to times other than during the premium play period.
5. A method of playing a video gaming system, comprising:
   (a) inputting at least one credit;
   (b) displaying at least one game;
   (c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play;
   (d) inputting of at least one additional credit for each game play of the premium play period; and
   (e) increasing a payout percentage during the premium play period.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a single game play.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.
8. A method of playing a video slot gaming system, comprising:
   (a) inputting at least one credit;
   (b) displaying at least one slot game;
   (c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play during the premium play period;
   (d) inputting the at least one additional credit for each game played during the premium play period; and
   (e) changing at least one reel of the slot game during the premium play period to increase a payout percentage.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a single game play.
10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.
11. A method of playing a video gaming system, comprising:
   (a) inputting at least one credit;
   (b) displaying at least one game;
   (c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play which requires inputting of at least one additional credit per game play;
   (d) inputting the at least one additional credit per game play during the premium play period; and
   (e) converting at least one group of indicia in the slot display that was a losing group of indicia prior to the premium play period to be a winning group of indicia during the premium play period.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a single game play.
13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of activating the premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.
14. The method of claim 11, including the steps of inputting of at least one additional credit per game play and increasing a payout percentage during the premium play period.
15. A method of playing a video slot gaming system, comprising:
   (a) inputting at least one credit;
   (b) displaying at least one slot game having a plurality of slot symbols displayed;
(c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a
premium play period for at least one slot game play
which requires inputting of at least one additional credit
per game play; and

(d) retaining at least one slot symbol of the slot game in
position during all game plays of the premium play
period.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating
the premium event initiator initiates the premium play
period for a single game play.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating
the premium event initiator initiates the premium play
period for a designated number of additional game plays.

18. The method of claim 15, including the steps of
inputting of at least one additional credit per game play and
increasing a payout percentage during the premium play
period.

19. A method of playing a video gaming system, comprising:

(a) inputting at least one credit;

(b) displaying at least one game;

(c) activating a premium event initiator to initiate a
premium play period for at least one slot game play which
requires inputting of at least one additional credit per
game play during the premium play period; and

(d) increasing speed of every game played during the
premium play period relative to play at other times.

20. The video gaming system of claim 19, wherein the
premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for
a single game play.

21. The video gaming system of claim 19, wherein the
premium event initiator initiates the premium play period for
a designated number of additional game plays.

22. The method of claim 19, including the steps of
inputting of at least one additional credit per game play and
increasing a payout percentage during the premium play
period.

23. A video gaming system, comprising:

(a) a video display;

(b) an input device for receipt of credits;

(c) a central processor adapted to display on the video
display at least one game; and

(d) a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play
period for at least one game play.

24. The video gaming system of claim 23, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a single game play.

25. The video gaming system of claim 23, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a designated number of additional game plays.

26. The video gaming system of claim 23, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period having an increased payout percentage and an
increased bet size compared to play at times other than
during the premium play period.

27. A video gaming system, comprising:

(a) a video display;

(b) an input device for receipt of credits;

(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;

(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet
amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than
the first bet amount;

(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video
display at least one game;

(f) a premium event initiator adapted to initiate a premium
play period for at least one game play wherein said
premium play period uses the second pay table.

28. The video gaming system of claim 27, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a single game play.

29. The video gaming system of claim 27, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a designated number of additional game plays.

30. A video slot gaming system, comprising:

(a) a video slot display;

(b) an input device for receipt of credits;

(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;

(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet
amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than
the first bet amount;

(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video
display at least one game;

(f) said premium play period adapted to include changing
at least one virtual reel of the video slot display to
increase a payout percentage.

31. The video gaming system of claim 30, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a single game play.

32. The video gaming system of claim 30, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a designated number of additional game plays.

33. A video gaming system, comprising:

(a) a video display;

(b) an input device for receipt of credits;

(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;

(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet
amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than
the first bet amount;

(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video
display at least one game; and

(f) said premium play period including an increased bet
amount and the second pay table having an increased
payout percentage relative to the first pay table.

34. The video gaming system of claim 33, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a single game play.

35. The video gaming system of claim 33, wherein the
premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play
period for a designated number of additional game plays.

36. A video slot gaming system, comprising:

(a) a video slot display;
(b) an input device for receipt of credits;
(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;
(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than the first bet amount;
(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game;
(d) a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play; and
(e) said premium play period adapted to require an additional bet amount wherein certain losing groups of slot symbols of a nonpremium player period are considered winning groups of slot symbols during the premium play period.

37. The video gaming system of claim 36, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a single game play.

38. The video gaming system of claim 37, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.

39. A video slot gaming system, comprising:
(a) a video slot display;
(b) an input device for receipt of credits;
(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;
(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than the first bet amount;
(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game;
(f) a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play; and
(g) said premium play period adapted to retain at least one slot symbol in position on the video slot display during the premium play period.

40. The video gaming system of claim 39, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a single game play.

41. The video gaming system of claim 39, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.

42. A video gaming system, comprising:
(a) a video display;
(b) an input device for receipt of credits;
(c) a first pay table associated with a first bet amount;
(d) a second pay table associated with a second bet amount, wherein said second bet amount is higher than the first bet amount;
(e) a central processor adapted to display on the video display at least one game; and
(f) a premium event initiator to initiate a premium play period for at least one game play, and wherein the premium play is played at an increased speed relative to play at other times.

43. The video gaming system of claim 42, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a single game play.

44. The video gaming system of claim 42, wherein the premium event initiator is adapted to initiate the premium play period for a designated number of additional game plays.

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