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(54) **SELECTABLE BONUS GAMING MACHINE AND METHOD**

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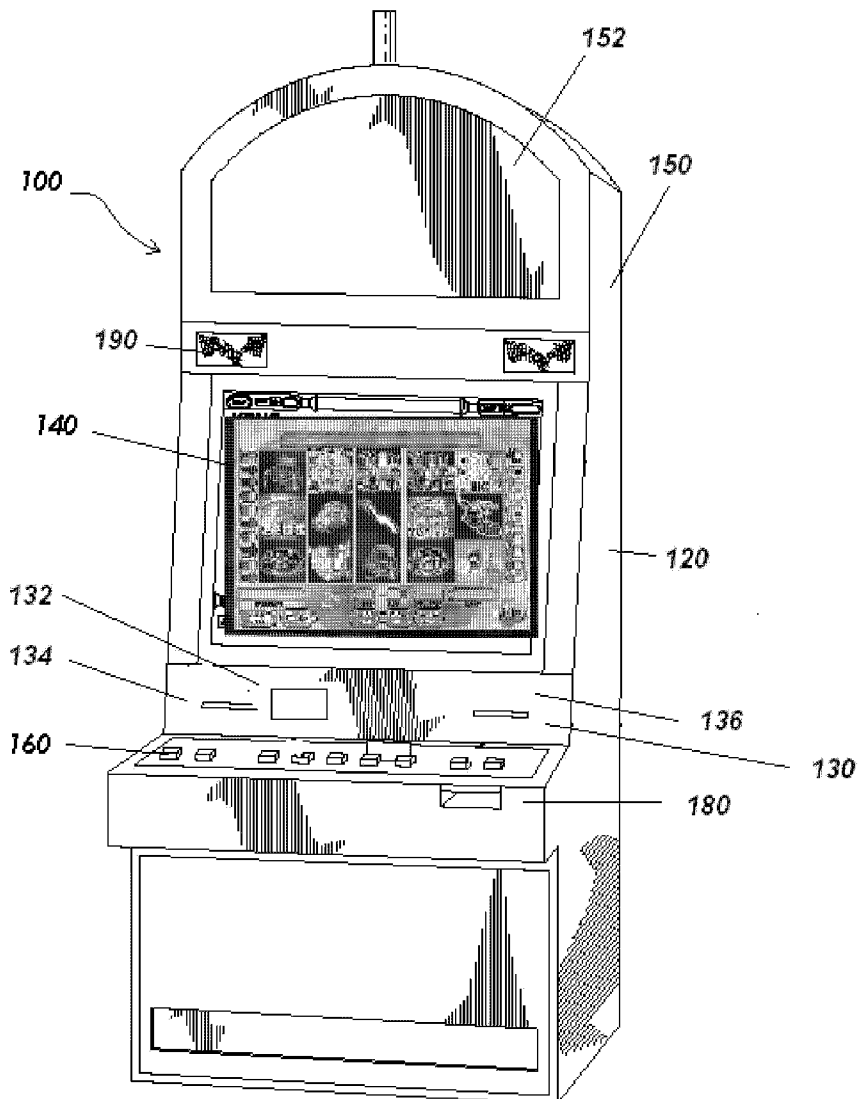
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(57) **ABSTRACT**
A selectable bonus gaming machine and method are disclosed. A gaming machine includes a game including a set of possible options, including a subset of options selectable by a player upon a triggering event. A bonus game is operated in accordance with the selected option.

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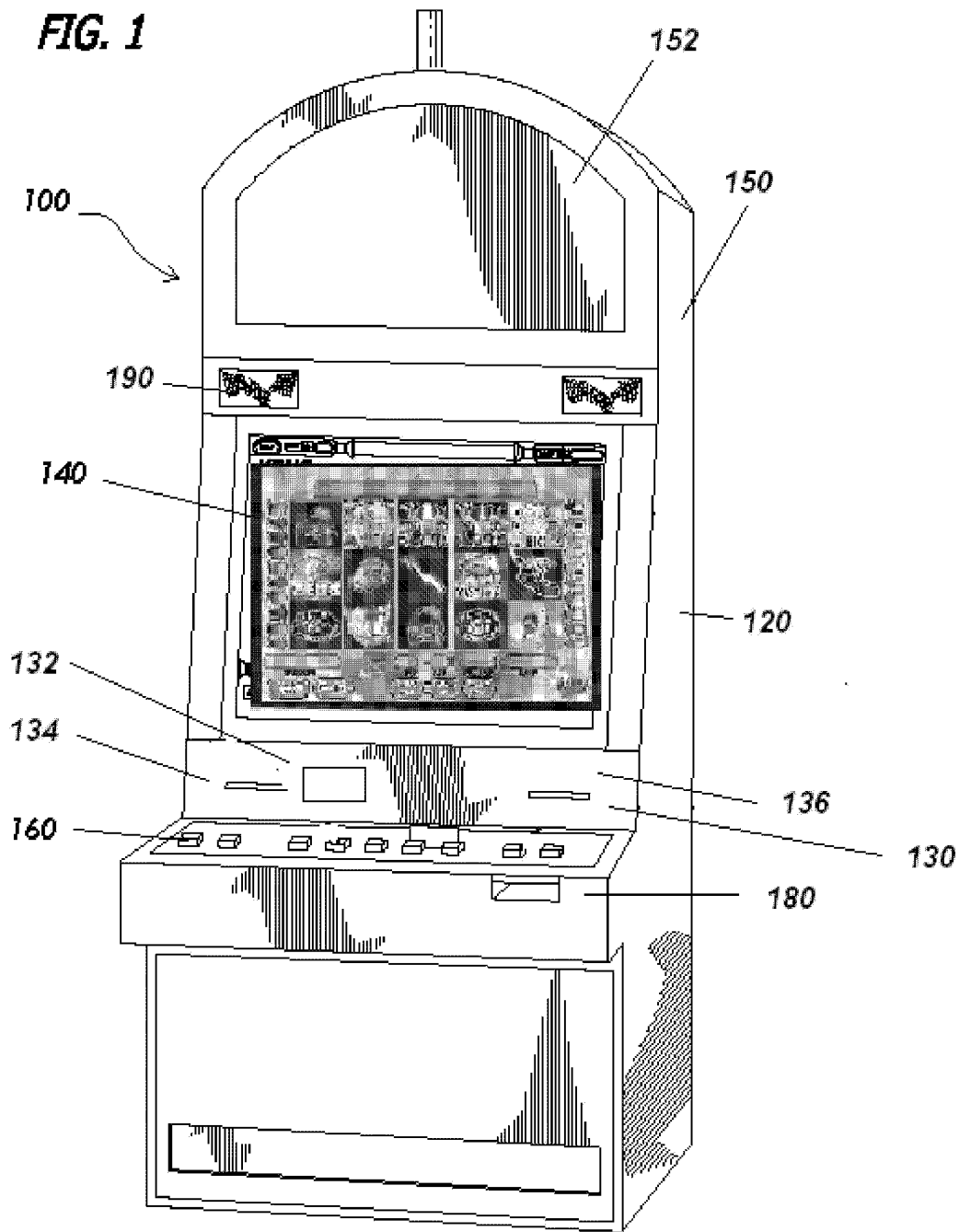
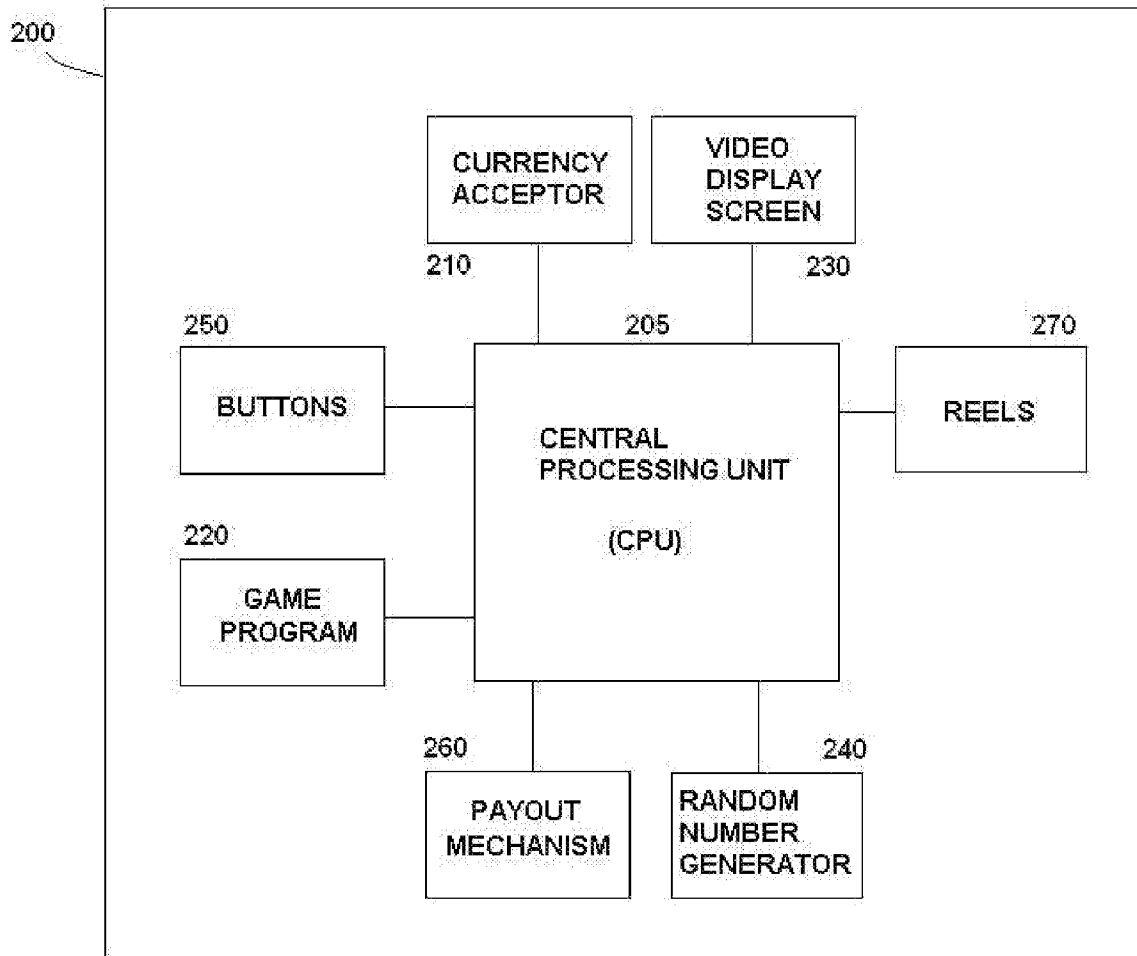


FIGURE 2



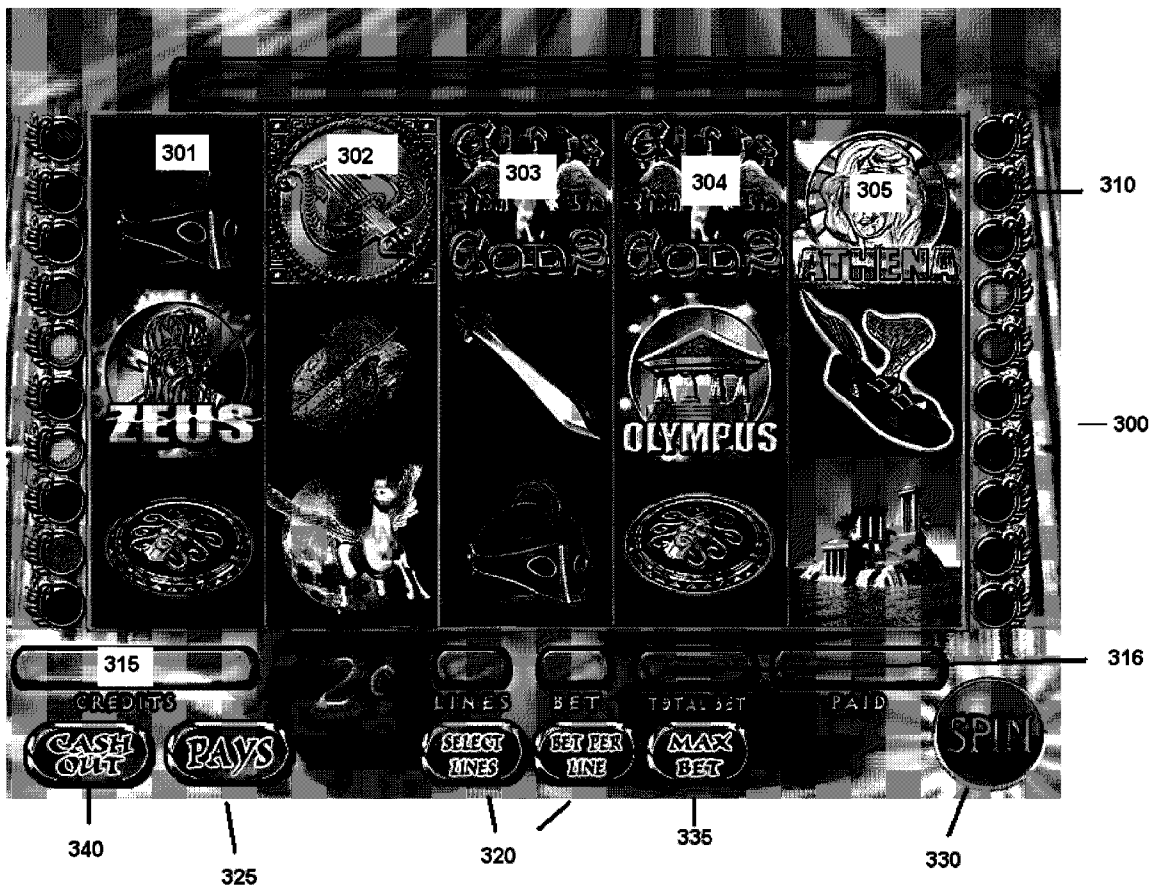


FIG. 3



FIG. 4 400 ↗

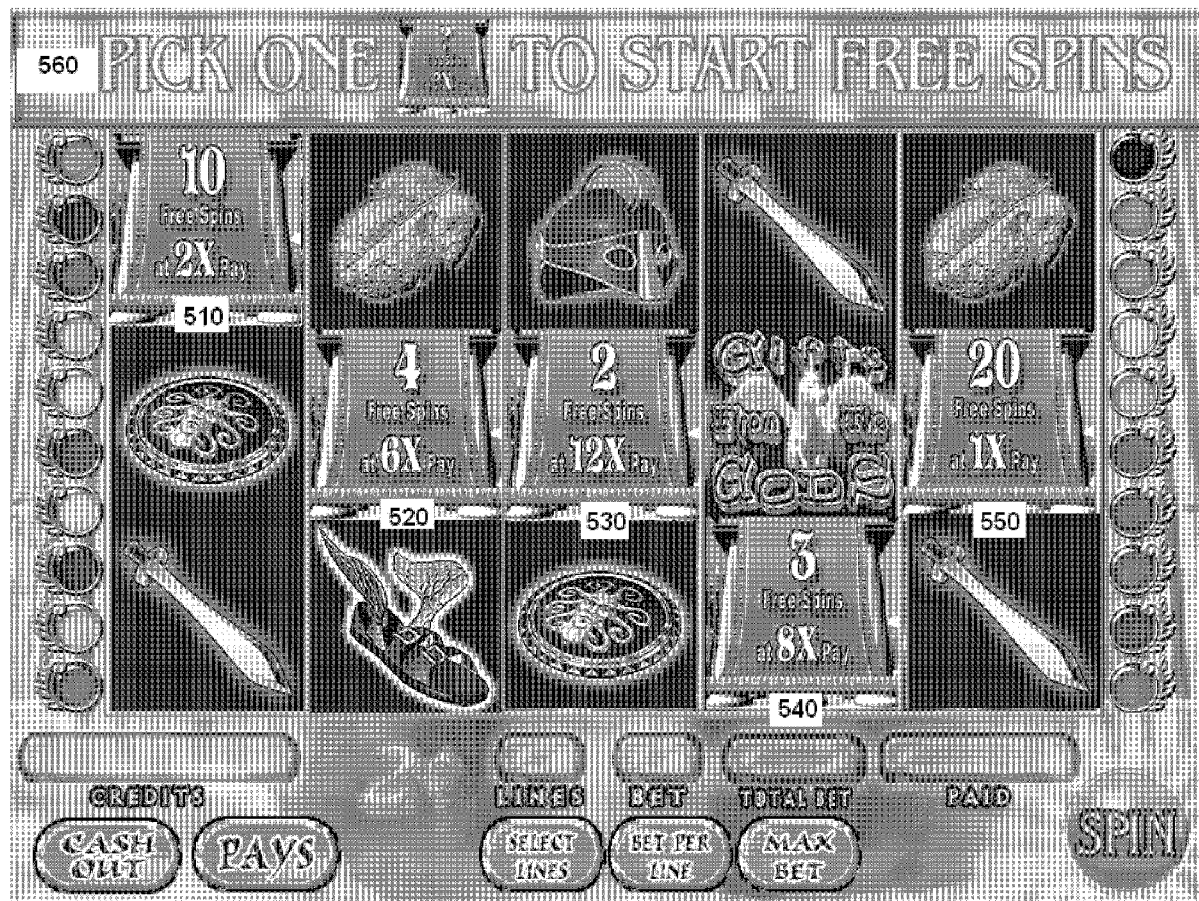


FIG. 5



FIG. 6

FIGURE 7

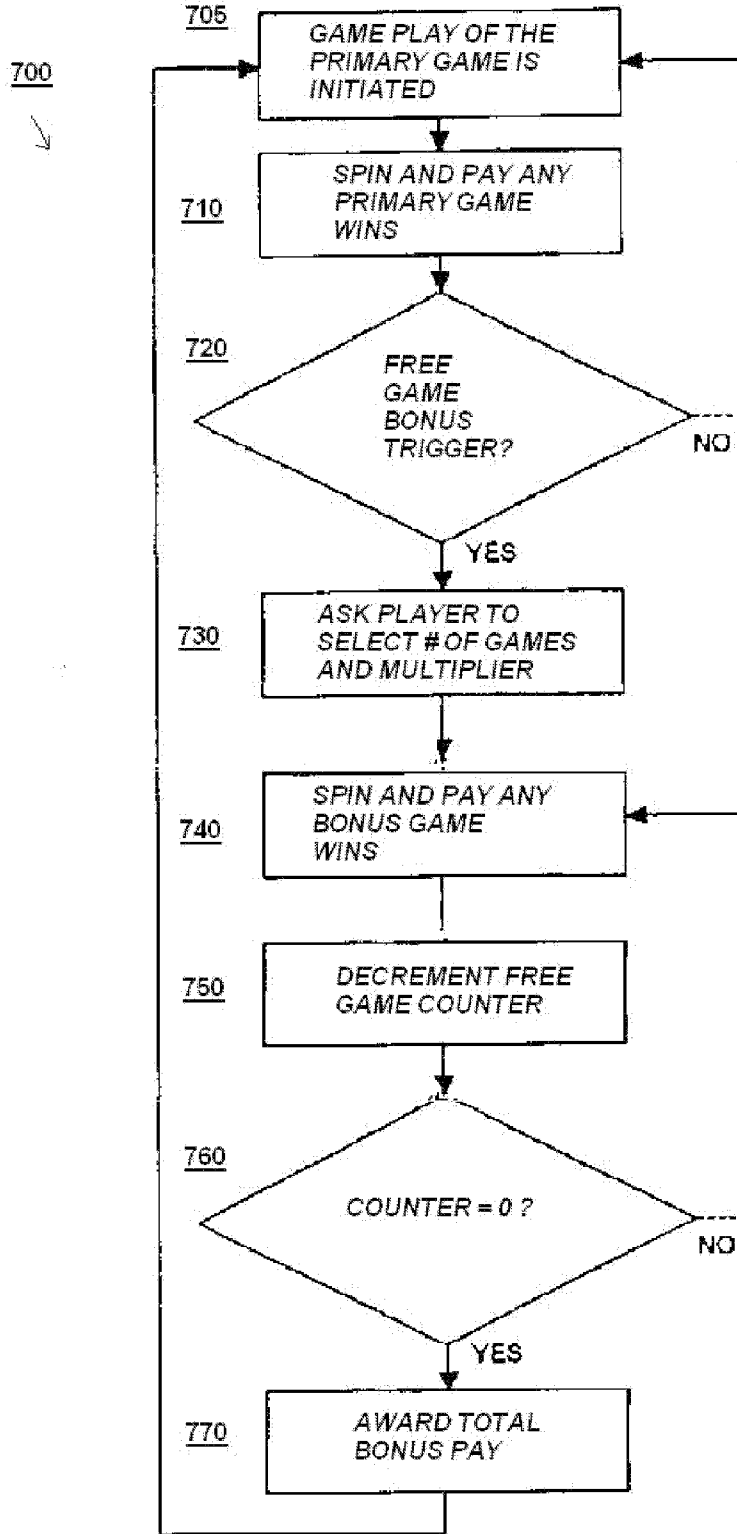
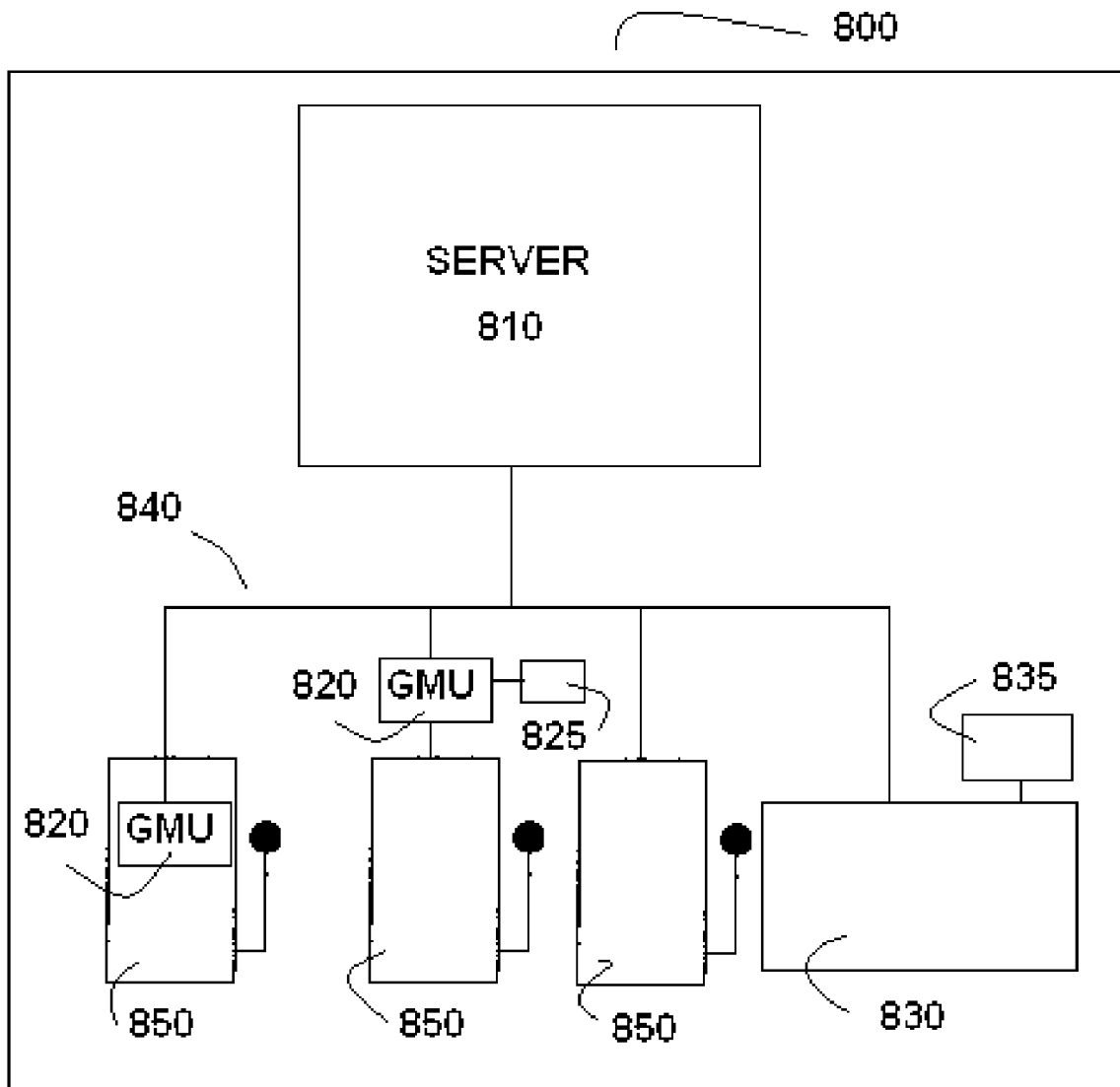


FIGURE 8



SELECTABLE BONUS GAMING MACHINE AND METHOD

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority from provisional application 60/716,039 filed on Sep. 10, 2005, hereby incorporated by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention is directed to gaming games and methods and, more particularly, to games and methods that provide a selectable bonus.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] In the prior art, various types of gaming machines have been developed with different features to captivate and maintain player interest. For example, gaming machines may include flashing displays, lighted displays, or sound effects to capture a player's interest in a gaming device. In general, a gaming machine allows a player to play a game in exchange for a wager. Depending on the outcome of the game, the player may be entitled to an award which is paid to the player by the gaming machine, normally in the form of currency or game credits.

[0004] Another important feature of maintaining player interest in a gaming machine includes providing the player with many opportunities to win awards, such as cash or prizes. For example, in some slot machines, the display windows show more than one adjacent symbol on each reel, thereby allowing for multiple-line betting. Other types of slot machines have been developed that offer second-chance or bonus games that provide players with additional opportunities to win, such as with additional free spins. Some gaming machines offer a player the opportunity to win millions of dollars by providing progressive jackpots; while some gaming machines include bonus games that are used to entice and enhance player excitement. For instance, bonus features of various types have been employed to reward players above the amounts normally awarded on a standard game pay schedule. Generally, such bonus features are triggered by predetermined events such as one or more appearances of certain combinations of indicia in the "base game". In order to stimulate interest, bonus awards are typically set to occur at a gaming machine on a statistical cycle based upon the number of base game plays.

[0005] While gaming machines including bonus games have been very successful, there remains a need for gaming machines with games that provide a player with enhanced excitement and increased opportunity of winning.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, a gaming machine includes a central processing unit operatively coupled to a set of player-operated controls and a memory configured to store a wagering game program operable by the central processing unit in accordance with the player-operated controls. The gaming machine further includes a display device controlled by the central processing unit upon a triggering event to display a bonus game in accordance with an option selected by the player.

[0007] In accordance with another embodiment of the invention, a method of operating a gaming machine includes the steps of accepting a wager from a player; initiating play of a game and selecting one of a set of possible outcomes of the game, the set of possible outcomes including a winning subset of outcomes. The method further includes the steps of, upon a triggering event, presenting a plurality of options to the player; accepting an option chosen by the player from the plurality of options; and operating a bonus game in accordance with the accepted option.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The accompanying drawings incorporated in and forming a part of the specification, illustrate several aspects of the present invention, and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the invention. In the drawings:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a gaming machine in accordance with one aspect of the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the physical and logical components of the gaming machine of FIG. 1.

[0011] FIG. 3 is a display image associated with a game of one embodiment of the invention.

[0012] FIG. 4 is a display image of a multi-page pay table for a game in accordance with one aspect of the invention.

[0013] FIG. 5 and FIG. 6 are display images of a game awarding bonus games in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

[0014] FIG. 7 is a functional block diagram depicting the steps associated with carrying out a method in accordance of one aspect of the invention.

[0015] FIG. 8 is a schematic block diagram showing the hardware elements of a networked gaming system in accordance with one aspect of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0016] In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, FIG. 1 illustrates a gaming machine 100 including cabinet housing 120, base game display 140, player-activated buttons 160, player tracking panel 136, bill/voucher acceptor 180 and one or more speakers 190. Cabinet housing 120 is a self-standing unit that is generally rectangular in shape and may be manufactured with reinforced steel or other rigid materials which are resistant to tampering and vandalism. Cabinet housing 120 houses a processor, circuitry, and software (not shown) for receiving signals from the player-activated buttons 160, operating the games, and transmitting signals to the respective displays and speakers. Any shaped cabinet may be implemented with any embodiment of gaming machine 100 so long as it provides access to a player for playing a game. For example, cabinet 120 may comprise a slant-top, bar-top, or table-top style cabinet. The operation of gaming machine 100 is described more fully below.

[0017] The plurality of player-activated buttons 160 may be used for various functions such as, but not limited to, selecting a wager denomination, selecting a game to be played, selecting a wager amount per game, initiating a

game, or cashing out money from gaming machine **100**. Buttons **160** function as input mechanisms and may include mechanical buttons, electromechanical buttons or touch screen buttons. Optionally, a handle (not shown) may be rotated by a player to initiate a game.

[0018] In other embodiments, buttons **160** may be replaced with various other input mechanisms known in the art such as, but not limited to, a touch screen system, touch pad, track ball, mouse, switches, toggle switches, or other input means used to accept player input. For example, one input means is a universal button module as disclosed in U.S. application Ser. No. 11/106,212, entitled "Universal Button Module," filed on Apr. 14, 2005, which is hereby incorporated by reference. Generally, the universal button module provides a dynamic button system adaptable for use with various games and capable of adjusting to gaming systems having frequent game changes. More particularly, the universal button module may be used in connection with playing a game on a gaming machine and may be used for such functions as selecting the number of pay lines to play in a game and the number of credits to bet per line.

[0019] Cabinet housing **120** may optionally include top box **150** which contains "top glass" **152** comprising advertising or payout information related to the game or games available on gaming machine **100**. Player tracking panel **136** includes player tracking card reader **134** and player tracking display **132**. Voucher printer **130** may be integrated into player tracking panel **136** or installed elsewhere in cabinet housing **120** or top box **150**.

[0020] Game display **140** presents a game of chance wherein a player receives one or more outcomes from a set of potential outcomes. For example, one game of chance is a video slot machine game, an example of which is entitled Gifts From the Gods. The Gifts From the Gods game features a basic slot machine game with five simulated spinning reels and is further described below. In other aspects of the invention, gaming machine **100** may present a mechanical reel slot machine, a video poker game, a video keno game, a lottery game, a bingo game, a Class II bingo game, a roulette game, a craps game, a blackjack game, a mechanical or video representation of a wheel game or the like. In alternative embodiments, it may further be appreciated that games of skill or games of chance involving some player skill may be implemented with gaming machine **100**.

[0021] In other aspects of the invention, gaming machine **100** may present a mechanical reel slot machine, a video poker game, a video keno game, a lottery game, a bingo game, a Class II bingo game, a roulette game, a craps game, a blackjack game, a mechanical or video representation of a wheel game or the like. In alternative embodiments, it may further be appreciated that games of skill or games of chance involving some player skill may be implemented with gaming machine **100**.

[0022] Mechanical or video/mechanical embodiments may include game displays such as mechanical reels, wheels, or dice as required to present the game to the player. In video/mechanical or pure video embodiments, game display **140** is, typically, a CRT or a flat-panel display in the form of, but not limited to, liquid crystal, plasma, electroluminescent, vacuum fluorescent, field emission, or any other type of panel display known or developed in the art. Game display **140** may be mounted in either a "portrait" or

"landscape" orientation and be of standard or "widescreen" dimensions (i.e., a ratio of one dimension to another of at least 16x9). For example, a widescreen display may be 32 inches wide by 18 inches tall. A widescreen display in a "portrait" orientation may be 32 inches tall by 18 inches wide. Additionally, game display **140** preferably includes a touch screen or touch glass system (not shown) and presents player interfaces such as, but not limited to, credit meter **144**, win meter **142** and touch screen buttons **146**. An example of a touch glass system is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,942,571, entitled "Gaming Device with Direction and Speed Control of Mechanical Reels Using Touch Screen," which is hereby incorporated by reference.

[0023] Game display **140** may also present information such as, but not limited to, player information, advertisements and casino promotions, graphic displays, news and sports updates, or even offer an alternate game. This information may be generated through a host computer networked with gaming machine **100** on its own initiative or it may be obtained by request of the player using either one or more of the plurality of player-activated buttons **160**; the game display itself, if game display **140** comprises a touch screen or similar technology; buttons mounted about game display **140** (not shown) which may permit selections such as those found on an ATM machine, where legends on the screen are associated with respective selecting buttons; or any player input device that offers the required functionality.

[0024] Cabinet housing **120** incorporates a single game display **140**. However, in alternate embodiments, cabinet housing **120** or top box **150** may house one or more additional displays or components (not shown) used for various purposes including additional game play screens, animated "top glass," progressive meters or mechanical or electromechanical devices such as, but not limited to, wheels, pointers or reels. The additional displays may or may not include a touch screen or touch glass system.

[0025] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing the interconnection of physical and logical components **200** of gaming machine **100**. Currency acceptor **210** is typically connected to central processing unit ("CPU") **205** by a serial connection such as RS-232 or USB. CPU **205** executes game program **220** that causes video display screen **230** to display a game that includes a plurality of simulated indicia-bearing reels **270**. In one embodiment, game program **220** is a game such as Gifts from the Gods, described further below.

[0026] When a player has inserted a form of currency such as, for example and without limitation, paper currency, coins or tokens, cashless tickets or vouchers, electronic funds transfers or the like into currency acceptor **210**, a signal is sent to CPU **205** which, in turn, assigns an appropriate number of credits for play. The player may further control the operation of gaming machine **100**, for example, to select the number of pay lines to play and the amount to wager via electromechanical or touchscreen buttons **250**. The game starts in response to the player pulling a lever or pushing one of buttons **250**, the detection of which causes CPU **205** to spin reels **270** displayed on video display screen **230**. Random number generator **240** responds to instructions from CPU **205** to provide a randomly selected stop position for each reel. CPU **205** then stops the reels according to the predetermined stop positions to display a plurality of reel

indicia on video display screen **230**. The set of possible outcomes includes a subset of outcomes related to the triggering of play of free games. In the event the displayed outcome is a member of this subset, CPU **205** under control of game program **220**, causes reels **270** to spin one or more additional times as will be described further below.

[0027] In various embodiments of gaming machine **100**, game program **220** is stored in a memory device (not shown). By way of example, but not by limitation, such memory devices include external memory devices, hard drives, CD-ROMs, DVDs, and flash memory cards. In an alternative embodiment, the game programs are stored in a remote storage device. In one embodiment, the remote storage device is housed in a remote server. The gaming machine may access the remote storage device via a network connection, including but not limited to, a local area network connection, a TCP/IP connection, a wireless connection, or any other means for operatively networking components together. Optionally, other data including graphics, sound files and other media data for use with gaming machine **100** are stored in the same or a separate memory device (not shown).

[0028] Predetermined payout amounts for certain combinations of reel indicia, including bonus game outcomes, are stored as part of game program **220**. Such payout amounts are, in response to instructions from CPU **205**, provided to the player in the form of coins, credits or currency via payout mechanism **260**, which may be one or more of a credit meter, a coin hopper, a voucher printer, an electronic funds transfer protocol or any other payout means known or developed in the art.

[0029] Turning now to FIG. **3**, in accordance with one aspect of the invention, the Gifts from the Gods base game is implemented on video display **300** using five simulated spinning reels **301-305**. Each of 20 pay line patterns (not shown) passes through one indicium on each of the five reels **301-305**. The number of pay lines and their patterns are by way of example only and may vary. The player selects the number of played pay lines and the number of credits or coins wagered on each line using touch screen controls **320** or gaming device control buttons **160** (FIG. **1**). The player may also collect the balance of his credits by pressing CASH OUT button **340**.

[0030] Credit meter **315** display the player's current credit balance, while other meters **316** may display, for example, the number of credits or coins wagered and the last amount paid by the payout mechanism **260** (FIG. **2**). Other meters **316** containing other information may be displayed. The amount wagered on each pay line may additionally be indicated in a bet tag **310** corresponding to each pay line.

[0031] The player initiates game play by pressing SPIN button **330**. In some embodiments, the player may simultaneously select all pay lines at the maximum number of coins or credits allowed per line by pressing a MAX BET touch screen button **335**. Corresponding buttons **160** on gaming machine **100** (FIG. **1**) may be used instead of the touch screen buttons to perform the actions described here without deviating from the scope of the invention. A video representation of reels **301-305** is made to spin and stop in their predetermined stop positions and then indicate whether the stop positions of the reels resulted in a winning game outcome.

[0032] Winning outcomes may be indicated on a pay table. In accordance with one embodiment, part of a pay table **400** is shown in FIG. **4**. The pay table may be accessible through a PAYS "help" button **325**. In alternate embodiments, the pay table may be presented on a second video or printed display attached to the gaming device (i.e. "pay glass"**152**, FIG. **1**). A winning combination, for example, could be three or more ZEUS symbols adjacent to one another on an active pay line. For each winning combination, the game device awards the player the award in the pay table, adjusted as necessary based on the number of credits wagered on the pay line on which the win occurred. Some video representations of pay tables may factor in the amount of the player's wager and no additional award adjustment is required.

[0033] In various embodiments, winning combinations may be evaluated across adjacent reels from left-to-right, from right-to-left or both. Additional winning combinations may be awarded when certain indicia do not necessarily accumulate adjacently on a pay line, but rather, appear anywhere on the reels (i.e., "scatter pays"). In addition, "wild" indicia may be used to complete winning combinations. Some "wild" indicia may also cause completed winning combinations to be result in pay amounts in excess of the normal winning combination by way of multiplication or addition, for example, a wild doubler symbol may be used.

[0034] The free game bonus feature is triggered by three or more symbols in any position (scattered) on adjacent reels. As shown in description **410** on FIG. **4**, the triggering symbols on the reels create choices from which the player is asked to pick. The set of choices are displayed at random depending on how many triggering symbols appear. For example, the free game bonus may be triggered by 3, 4, or 5 scattered symbols.

[0035] The player is shown free spin/multiplier combinations and asked to choose the combination he wishes to play for the free game bonus feature. The following is an example, not intended to be limiting in any way, of the options that might be shown to the player: 20 free games @ 1xpay; 10 free games @ 2xpay; 4 free games @ 6xpay; 3 games @ 8xpay; or 2 free games @ 12xpay. In one embodiment, the player is allowed to see the prize pool from which his free games will award prizes and pick the pool he prefers. For example, each prize pool might include progressive awards of varying amounts.

[0036] In one embodiment, the number of free games and multipliers offered to the chosen using a weighted method. In the example in Table 1 below, the various esented have an equal probability of being selected. In other embodiments, the r each choice may not be equal, for example, two free spins with a multiplier of y have a probability of selection of 15% while three free spins with a multiplier of have a probability of 25%.

TABLE 1

Free Spins with 3, 4, or 5 trigger symbols				
Free Spins	Multiplier	PROB	Free Spin CONTRIBUTION	Multiplier Contribution
2	12	20.0000%	0.40	2.4
3	8	20.0000%	0.60	1.6
4	6	20.0000%	0.80	1.2

TABLE 1-continued

Free Spins with 3, 4, or 5 trigger symbols				
Free Spins	Multiplier	PROB	Free Spin CONTRIBUTION	Multiplier Contribution
10	2	20.0000%	2.00	0.4
20	1	20.0000%	4.00	0.2
TOTAL		100.00%	7.80	5.8

Average Spins: 7.80
Average Multiplier: 5.8

[0037] In some embodiments, each player option may not pay out equally well. For example, the matrix in Table 2 shows the average number of credits and the payback contribution to the game based on different player choices. In this case, choosing 4 free spins would provide the best average payback. In other embodiments, the average payback per player selection may equal.

TABLE 2

	Free Spin Calculation:				
	2 spins	3 spins	4 spins	10 spins	20 spins
number of trigger combos	3,357,126	3,357,126	3,357,126	3,357,126	3,357,126
bonus trigger probability	0.007879	0.007879	0.007879	0.007879	0.007879
bonus type frequency	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
bonus games awarded	2.00	3.00	4.00	10.00	20.00
bonus games expected	0.016010	0.024209	0.032542	0.085529	0.187056
expected number of spins	2.0320	3.0726	4.1302	10.8553	23.7411
cost of bonus games	0	0	0	0	0
bonus payback contribution	13.8731%	13.9914%	14.1116%	12.4081%	13.6424%
average bonus pay per credit bet	17.607711	17.757877	17.910486	15.748403	17.314928
avg. bonus pay per credit bet (max)	17.623735	17.782107	17.943056	15.834005	17.502144

[0038] The reels used in the free games may contain the same symbols and weighted mapping as the base game reels or may contain different symbols and/or mapping as the base game reels.

[0039] It will be apparent that various base game outcomes can be utilized to trigger the play of free bonus games, including, but not limited to, awarding bonus play when certain symbols appear on a pay line, when certain symbols are scattered, when no symbols of a certain type appear, when a certain winning combination occurs or, regardless of the visible symbols, at random or fixed intervals. In another embodiment, the feature could be triggered by a morphing symbol, for example, an ordinary symbol that changes into a triggering symbol.

[0040] In other embodiments, free games that do not use reels may be awarded. For example and without limitation, free games that present cards, roll dice, spin wheels, or offer a "second screen" bonus may be awarded, either on the primary game display or on a separate display or device, for example on a video display or mechanical wheel. Multipliers may or may not be applied to pays during free games. Free games may include scatter pays or be implemented on reels which are separate from the base game.

[0041] The player may press a "start" button at the beginning of each free game, or the games may proceed automatically. In Gifts From the Gods, the reels are spun automatically and stopped, then evaluated for any winning combinations. If winning combinations are present, the combinations are evaluated against a pay table and awarded to the player on a bonus win meter. In another embodiment, bonus wins are paid immediately following each free game. Following each free game, the number of free games remaining on a counter is decremented. When the counter reaches zero, free game play is terminated and the player is awarded any win accumulated on the bonus win meter through a payout device, by transference to a credit meter or by any other method known or developed in the art for awarding a player a prize.

[0042] In another embodiment, a free games counter may be initialized to zero. Each time a free game is played, the free games expended counter is incremented. When the counter reaches the number of pre-awarded free games, free

game play is terminated and the player is awarded any accumulated win as described above.

[0043] The number of free games remaining or expended can be displayed in any fashion including, but not limited to, a numerical meter, a graphical meter or both.

[0044] In accordance with one aspect of the invention, FIGS. 5 and 6 provide an example of free game play. Referring to FIG. 5, five "free spin selection" symbols 510, 520, 530, 540 and 550 appear on the reels, triggering free game play selection. Free spin selection 510 offers the player 10 free spins at 2xpay, free spin selection 520 offers the player 4 free spins at 6xpay, free spin selection 530 offers the player 2 free spins at 12xpay, free spin selection 540 offers the player 3 free spins at 8xpay and free spin selection 550 offers the player 20 free spins at 1xpay. Prompt 560 instructs the player to select one of the presented options by pressing the touchscreen at one of the five spin selection symbols 510-550. In alternate embodiments, a button or other input device associated with each of the choices is provided. For example, buttons 160 (FIG. 1) may be used by the player to select an option.

[0045] Turning to FIG. 6, in accordance with one embodiment of the invention, the number of free games remaining to the player is displayed in the REMAINING FREE SPINS

meter **610**. Any awards won during the free games are tabulated in BONUS WIN meter **620**. In this example, the free game reels spin in the traditional vertical manner, up, down, or bi-directionally. In other embodiments, the free game reels may spin horizontally. One example of bi-directional reel spins is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,251,898, entitled "Gaming Apparatus with Bi-directional Reels" which is hereby incorporated by reference.

[0046] A logical flow diagram generally depicting the steps associated with a method **700** for carrying out a selectable bonus game in accordance with one aspect of the invention is presented in FIG. 7. The order of actions as shown in FIG. 7 and described below is only illustrative, and should not be considered limiting. For example, the order of the actions may be changed, additional steps may be added or some steps may be removed without deviating from the spirit of the invention.

[0047] First, the base game is initiated on gaming device **100** of FIG. 1 at block **705**. For example in a slot primary game, the player initiates play of the slot reels by inserting currency of some form, selecting the number of lines to play, the number of credits per line and presses a start switch or button. The reels are spun and the player may be awarded a base game award by the game or the game may trigger one or more free bonus games, block **710**.

[0048] Next at decision block **720**, regardless of win or loss in block **710**, it is determined whether any free game bonus trigger combinations appear on the reels on the reels. If no triggering combination appears on the reels, processing returns to block **705** and normal play continues on gaming device **100** (FIG. 1), otherwise processing proceeds to block **730**.

[0049] The player is asked to select his preferred combination of number of free games and multiplier factor at block **730** and the free game counter is initialized. In block **740**, a free bonus game is presented and any resulting wins are paid, either immediately or to a win meter.

[0050] The free game counter is decremented at block **750** and then examined in decision block **760**. If the number of free games remaining is not zero, free game processing continues at block **740**, otherwise any credits on the bonus win meter are transferred to the game credit meter or otherwise paid at block **770** and normal game play resumes at block **705**.

[0051] Referring to FIG. 8, in accordance with one aspect of the invention, gaming system **800** includes server **810**, gaming machines **850**, and network **840** connecting gaming machines **850** to server **810**. Additionally, gaming display computer **830** is shown connected to network **840**. Server **810** may be selected from a variety of conventionally available servers. The type of server used is generally determined by the platform and software requirements of the gaming system. Examples of suitable servers are an IBM RS6000-based server, an IBM AS/400-based server or a Microsoft Windows-based server, but it should be appreciated that any suitable server may be used. It may also be appreciated that server **810** may be configured as a single "logical" server that comprises multiple physical servers. Gaming machines **850** operate similar to conventional peripheral networked terminals. Gaming machines **850** have a player interface such as a display, a card reader, and

selection buttons through which gaming machines **850** interact with a player playing a selectable bonus wagering game. The player interface is used for making choices such as the amount of a bet or the number of lines to bet. Gaming machines **850** also provide information to server **810** concerning activity on gaming machines **850** and provide a communication portal for players with server **810**. For example, the player interface may be used for selecting different server-related menu options such as, but not limited to, transferring a specified number of credits from a player account onto the credit meter of the gaming machine, or for transferring credits from the gaming machine to a central player account.

[0052] In various embodiments, any of the gaming machines **850** may be a mechanical reel spinning slot machine, video slot machine, video poker machine, keno machine, video blackjack machine, or a gaming machine offering one or more of the above described base games offering a selectable bonus game. Networking components (not shown) facilitate communications across network **840** between the system server **810** and game management units **820** and/or gaming display control computers **830** that control displays for carousels of gaming machines. Game management units (GMU's) **820** connect gaming machines to networking components and may be installed in the gaming machine cabinet or external to the gaming machine. The function of the GMU is similar to the function of a network interface card connected to a desktop personal computer (PC). Some GMU's have much greater capability and can perform such tasks as presenting and playing a selectable bonus game using a display **825** operatively connected to the GMU **820**. Displays related to selectable bonus games being played on gaming machines **850** or GMU displays **825** may also be presented on gaming display **835** by gaming display control computer **830**. In one embodiment, the GMU **820** is a separate component located outside the gaming machine. Alternatively, in another embodiment, the GMU **820** is located within the gaming machine. Optionally, in an alternative embodiment, one or more gaming machines **850** connect directly to the network and are not connected to a GMU **820**. A gaming system of the type described above also allows a plurality of selectable bonus games in accordance with the various embodiments of the invention to be linked under the control of server **810** for cooperative or competitive play in a particular area, carousel, casino or between casinos located in geographically separate areas.

[0053] One will appreciate that a gaming system may also comprise other types of components, and the above illustrations are meant only as examples and not as limitations to the types of components or games having a selectable bonus element in a gaming system. Additionally, it may further be appreciated that each of the games could be operated on a remote host computer such that a player initiates play with the host computer over a network via the player interface and gaming machine **850** operates the respective gaming and video displays in conjunction with the game whose play is controlled by the remote computer.

[0054] Although the description above contains much specificity, it should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but as merely providing an illustration of the presently preferred embodiment of the invention. The various embodiments disclosed herein are directed to a system

and method for providing a selectable bonus game in a gaming device. Embodiments of the system, method and gaming device are illustrated and described herein by way of example only and not by way of limitation. Those skilled in the art will readily recognize various modifications and changes may be made to the invention without departing from the true spirit and scope of the claimed invention as set forth below.

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What is claimed is:

- 1. A gaming machine comprising:
 - a central processing unit operatively coupled to a set of player-operated controls;
 - a memory configured to store a wagering game program operable by the central processing unit in accordance with the player-operated controls;
 - and a display device controlled by the central processing unit upon a triggering event to display a bonus game in accordance with an option selected by the player.
- 2. The gaming machine of claim 1 wherein the triggering event is based on an outcome of the game program.
- 3. The gaming machine of claim 1 wherein the triggering event is not based on an outcome of the game program.
- 4. The gaming machine of claim 1 wherein the triggering event is based on the number of games played.
- 5. The gaming machine of claim 1 wherein the option selected by the player is part of a set of selectable options.
- 6. The gaming machine of claim 5 wherein the set of selectable options is derived from a set of possible options.
- 7. The gaming machine of claim 1 further comprising a second display upon which a primary game is displayed.
- 8. A method of operating a gaming machine, the method including the steps of:

- accepting a wager from a player;
- initiating play of a game;
- selecting one of a set of possible outcomes of the game, the set of possible outcomes including a winning subset of outcomes;
- selecting one of a set of possible outcomes of the game, the set of possible outcomes including a winning subset of outcomes;
- upon a triggering event, presenting a plurality of options to the player;
- accepting an option chosen by the player from the plurality of options;
- and operating a bonus game in accordance with the accepted option.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the triggering event is based on the selected outcome being a member of the winning subset of outcomes.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the triggering event is not based on the selected outcome being a member of the winning subset of outcomes.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the triggering event is based on the number of games played.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein the average expected value for each option in the plurality of options is equal.

13. The method of claim 8 wherein the average expected value for each option in the plurality of options is not equal.

14. The method of claim 8, further including the step of selecting the plurality of options from a set of possible options.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein each option in the set of possible options is included in the plurality of options presented to the player.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein each option in the set of possible options is not included in the plurality of options presented to the player.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein each option in the set of possible options has an equal probability of being included in the plurality of options presented to the player.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein each option in the set of possible options does not have an equal probability of being included in the plurality of options presented to the player.

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