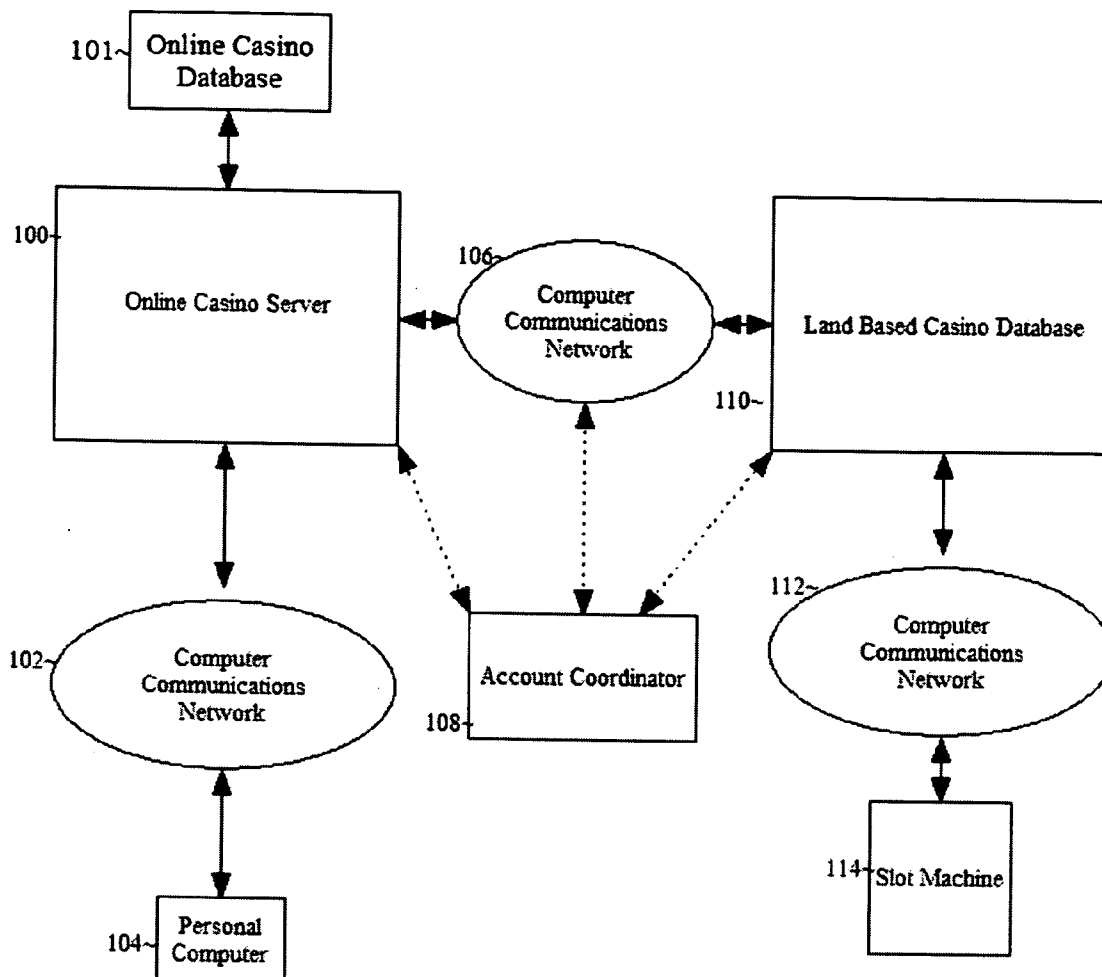




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Muskin(10) **Pub. No.: US 2005/0170883 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Aug. 4, 2005**(54) **CASINO COMPLIMENTARY SYSTEMS****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **Jon Muskin**, Chevy Chase, MD (US)Correspondence Address:
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WASHINGTON, DC 20037-1233 (US)(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **A63F 9/24**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **463/25**(57) **ABSTRACT**(21) Appl. No.: **10/888,296**(22) Filed: **Jul. 12, 2004****Related U.S. Application Data**(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 10/771,081,
filed on Feb. 4, 2004.

A system, method, and computer readable storage medium for implementing wagering games and sharing player account information between affiliated establishments. The wagering games can be implemented online or in a land based casino, and the player can earn complimentary from either the online casino or the land based casino.



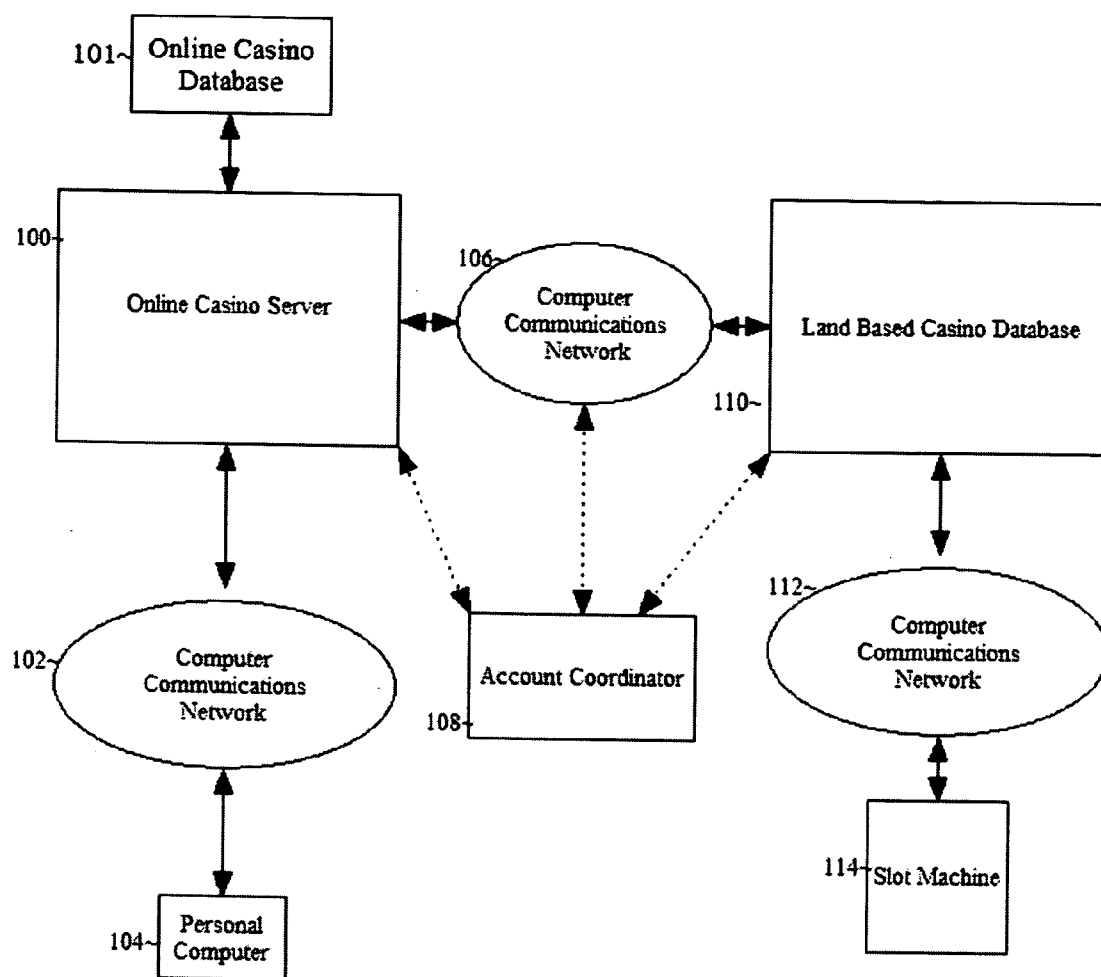


Figure 1

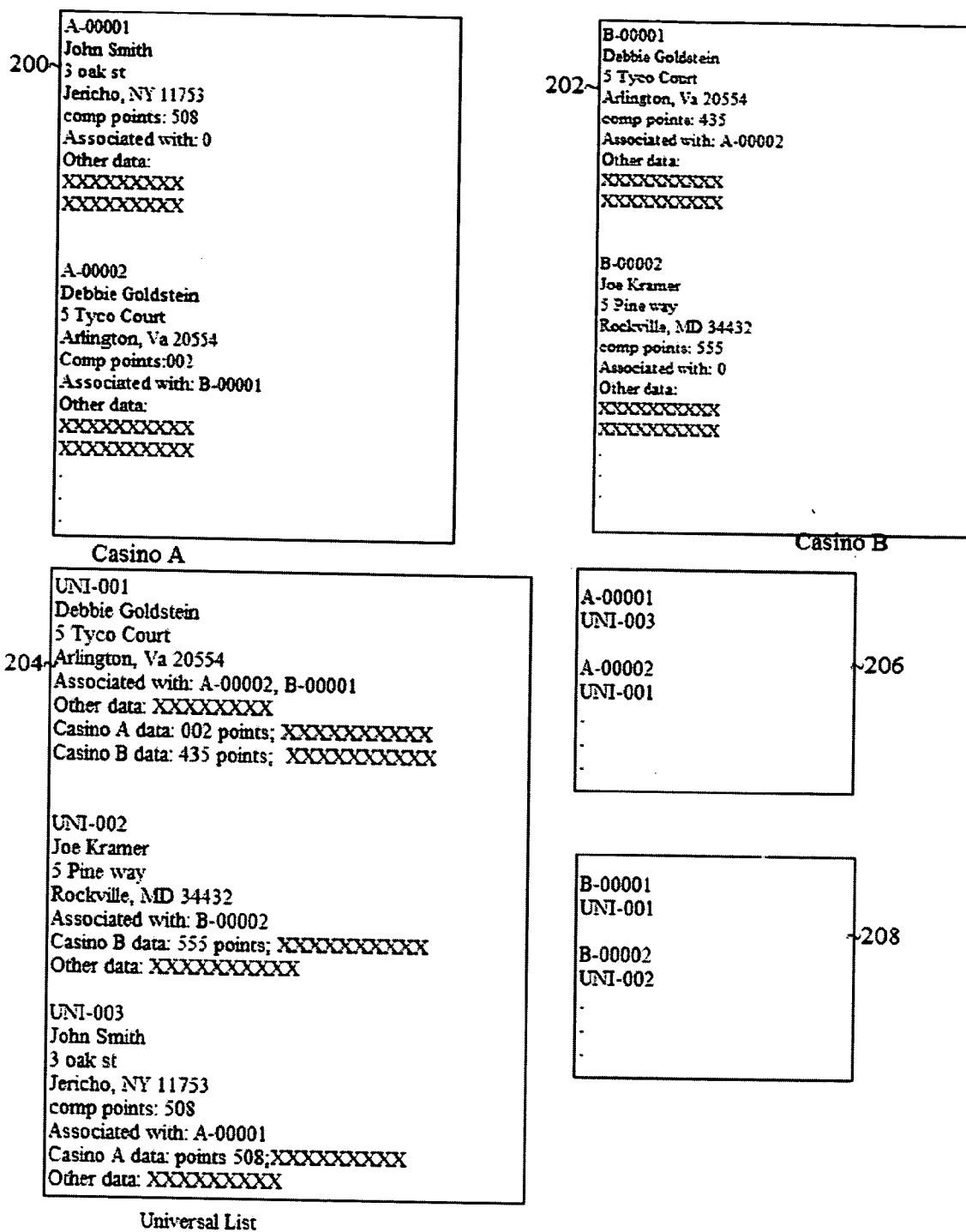


Figure 2

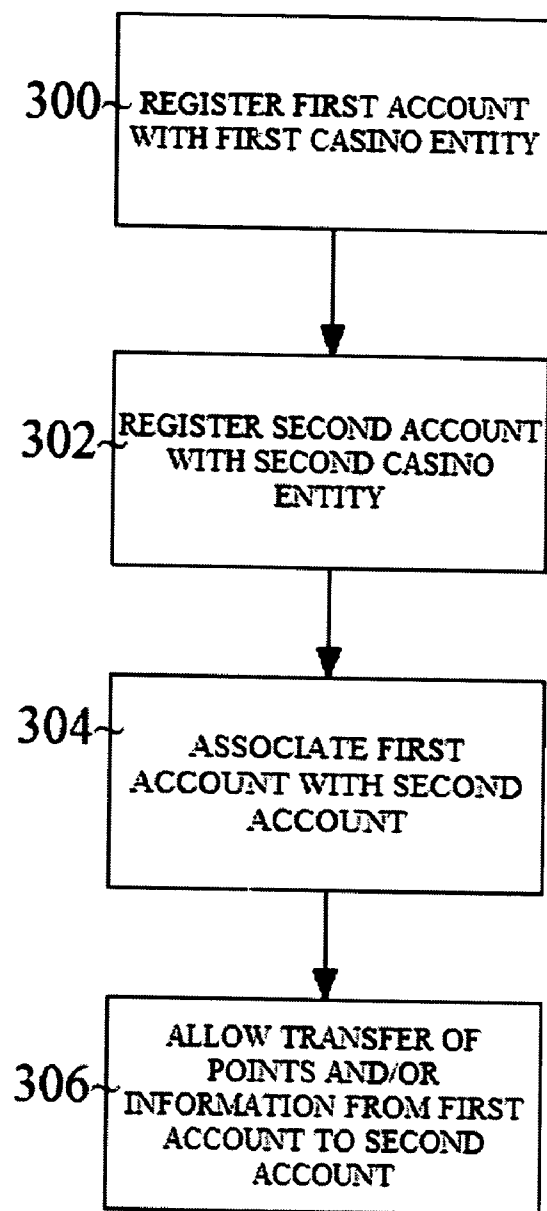


FIGURE 3

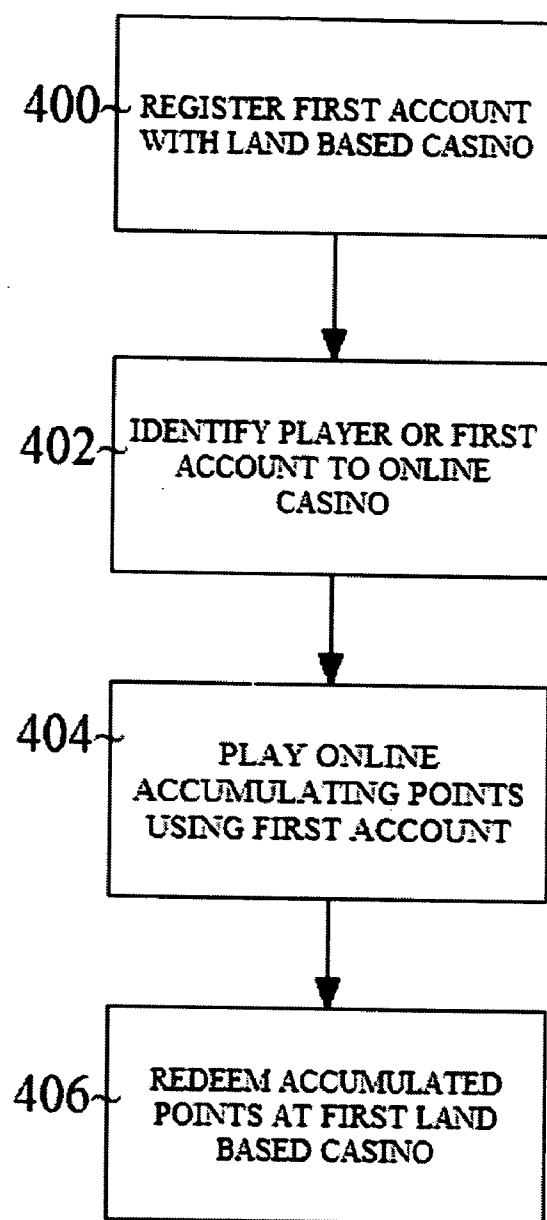


FIGURE 4

CASINO COMPLIMENTARY SYSTEMS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This Application claims priority to and is a Continuation in Part (CIP) of application No. 10/771,081, entitled, "A CASHLESS SLOT MACHINE AND/OR AMUSEMENT DEVICE WITH SPECIAL FEATURES," filed Feb. 4, 2004, which is incorporated by reference in its entirety herein.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention is directed to a method, device, and computer readable storage medium for implementing improved complimentary systems for affiliated wagering establishments.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Online casinos are a billion dollar industry. An online casino is a casino where a player can play remotely using a computer communications network (typically the Internet) for real money.

[0006] Brick and mortar casinos are also a billion dollar industry. More and more countries are legalizing gambling.

[0007] Both types of casinos give complimentary (comps) in order to attract and reward player for their play.

[0008] What is needed is a way to coordinate comps from online casinos and brick and mortar casinos.

[0009] What is also needed are ways to improve administration of complimentary systems over the prior art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] It is an aspect of the present invention to provide improvements and innovations in complimentary systems used in wagering establishments such as online and/or land based casinos.

[0011] The above aspects can be obtained by a method that includes (a) a player registering a first account with a land based casino; (b) the player registering a second account with an online based casino; and (b) associating the first account and the second account.

[0012] These together with other aspects and advantages which will be subsequently apparent, reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] Further features and advantages of the present invention, as well as the structure and operation of various embodiments of the present invention, will become apparent and more readily appreciated from the following description of the preferred embodiments, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings of which:

[0014] **FIG. 1** is a block diagram illustrating one example of hardware used to implement the present system, according to an embodiment of the present system.

[0015] **FIG. 2** is a block diagram illustrating records for affiliated casinos, according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0016] **FIG. 3** is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of implementing the present invention, according to an embodiment of the present invention; and

[0017] **FIG. 4** illustrates a method of using a same account for a land an online casino, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0018] Reference will now be made in detail to the presently preferred embodiments of the invention, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout.

[0019] The present system relates to casino complimentary systems and improvements thereof.

[0020] A standard method of providing comps in brick and mortar casinos for slot players is to give a player a fixed cash back for each dollar bet (or slot pull), which gets recorded in the player's loyalty account. Table game play is rated a little differently, since a human is typically needed (unless automated systems are used) to record a player's wagers. Typically, a table game player is rated based on his or her average wagers and time played, which gets recorded in the player's loyalty account.

[0021] Comps can be issued in an online casino in a similar manner to brick and mortar casinos. Since a player's table game wagers are all processed automatically, no human is required for an online casino to track the player's table game play.

[0022] Typically, comp points stored in a player's loyalty account can be used to exchange for cash, cash towards purchases, free or discounted room, food or beverage, free trips back to the casino, or any other known incentive casinos award. In an online casino, typically comp points are exchanged for cash which can be further wagered.

[0023] A brick and mortar casino may also open an online casino. Or a brick and mortar casino may affiliate with an online casino. It would be advantageous to the casinos involved (and the player as well) to share data from the player's loyalty account(s) from both the online casino and the brick and mortar casino (or these accounts can be merged, as discussed below in more detail).

[0024] With a coordination or synergy between accounts, a player can earn comp points by gambling online which can be applied to an affiliated brick and mortar casino. For example, a fictitious "Sunshine Casino" is a brick and mortar casino that also opens an online casino. According to the present system, a player that plays using the Sunshine online casino can now apply points earned to complimentary at the Sunshine brick and mortar casino.

[0025] This is advantageous in that it encourages the player to play using the online casino at his home since the player knows that the points he or she earns can be applied to complimentary at the real live casino as well (or vice versa). This also encourages loyalty by encouraging the

player to gamble at the online casino (if the player has a loyalty account with the affiliated land casino) and vice versa. This system also encourages marketing efforts by the casino, as the brick and mortar casino can use a player's online play in order to base a decision to offer the player more incentives (i.e. if a player loses a lot of money online, the casino may offer him a free or discounted trip to the player if the player visits the land based casino).

[0026] A casino can also judge a player's skill level when the player plays at the online casino, and the player's skill level can be used in the decision whether or not to offer an incentive for the land based affiliated casino.

[0027] **FIG. 1** is a block diagram illustrating one example of hardware used to implement the present system, according to an embodiment of the present system.

[0028] An online casino server **100** is connected to a computer communications network **102** (typically the Internet), which is connected to a personal computer. The online casino server is also typically connected to an online casino database **101**. The online casino database **101** stores player information, including player name, address, playing history, loyalty points earned, etc. A player typically accesses his or her online playing account by entering a username and a password at the player's personal computer **104**, which is then transmitted to the server **100**, which then verifies the username and password by querying the casino database **101**.

[0029] A slot machine **114** in a land based casino is connected to a land based casino database **110** using a computer communications network **112** (typically a LAN or other type of local connection apparatus). A player inserts his or her loyalty card into the slot machine **114** (or adjacent loyalty card reader), which reads the player's account number. Any play (including comp points earned) by the player on the slot machine **114** is recorded in the land based casino database **110**.

[0030] It is noted that the land based casino and the online casino illustrated in **FIG. 1** may be owned by the same party or have some type of business affiliation. The present system coordinates these two entities so that player information can be shared and utilized for improved marketing.

[0031] Several configuration of the coordination can be implemented, a few of those are described herein. The online casino server **100** may be connected to the land based casino database (using a server not pictured) using a computer communications network **106** (such as the Internet).

[0032] An account coordinator **108** can be used to coordinate accounts between the online casino database **101** and the land based casino database **110**. More on the account **108** will be discussed below in more detail.

[0033] The account coordinator can be located at the online casino server **100**. Alternatively, the account coordinator can be located at the land based casino database **110**. Alternatively, the account coordinator can be linked to the online casino server **100** and/or the land based casino database **110** via a computer communications network (not necessarily the same network as described previously). Further a plurality of account coordinators can be located at various locations which implement any of operations described below in more detail.

[0034] The account coordinator **108** can be used to implement any of a number of operations which may be needed to coordinate accounts. One such operation is that of identifying an identical player in the land based casino database **110** from the player's information in the online casino server **100** (or vice versa).

[0035] For example, a player registers at an online casino. An account coordinator (typically located at the online casino server **100**, although it can be located anywhere) can query the land based casino database **110** and transmit the player's name and address. Transmitting the player's name alone may not be adequate since many players in a database may have a same name. the land based casino database **110** can run a query to see if this player exists in the land based casino database **110**. If not, then the land based casino database **110** can respond to the account coordinator that no such player record is found. If such a record is found, then the online casino database **110** can typically respond with an indication that such a record is found and can also include information in that record. At this point, the online casino database **100** can associate the player's account with the account found in the land based casino database **110**. The association can be performed by any combination of: identifying the player's land based casino database record in the player's online casino database record; identifying the player's online based casino database record in the player's land based casino database record; the online casino database record can use the same player account number as the land based casino database record, thus virtually merging the player's online casino database account record and the player's land based casino account record. In this latter case, any play by the player in either the online casino or the land based casino is recorded in the player's account (typically at the land based casino database **110**, although the data can also be transmitted to the online casino database **100** as well, or both, or an additional database (not pictured)). The player may be prompted when a match is found to inquire whether or not the player wishes to affiliate the two accounts. More simply, when a player signs up for an online account he may be given the option to enter a player account number for his or her land based player account.

[0036] The above process can work in reverse too, wherein if a player signs up for a loyalty account at the land based casino, the online casino database can be queried for a matching player record. If there is a match, the accounts are associated as well.

[0037] In a further embodiment, a player may request manually that his or her accounts from an online casino and a land based affiliate be merged or associated. The player can input his account names or numbers into an application for this purpose, and the application can retrieve the appropriate records and associate (or merge) them.

[0038] It is noted that association generally means to point one account to the other or both to each other. An additional database can also store a record of associated accounts which contains an index of each player's affiliated accounts. Comp points can be transferred from one account to the other (typically by request of the player, either electronically or verbally to a casino representative). Alternatively, associated accounts can also reflect the other's value and can result in the same value for comp points earned.

[0039] A merger generally means that one account, not two is maintained. It may be that two accounts are actually

maintained in the implementation, but this fact may be transparent to the player. For example, if a player already possesses a land based account, and the player plays online, the land based account can be used for the online account as well (using a computer communication network) linked to the online casino database. However, in practice, an online casino account may still be needed to store data particular for the online environment. The manner which an online casino offers complimentaries for table games may be different from the method used in land based casinos. Thus, an online casino may wish to separately track and administer comps for table game play but combine points for slot play. When the player plays online or in the land based casino, and views his or her current comp points, with merged accounts they will typically be the same (if they have been recently coordinated).

[0040] Associated (or even merged accounts) can be updated periodically, for example every midnight. This way, data from one account can be transferred to the other. When points are redeemed, the redemption can be transmitted to the database of the other non-redeeming party, or a central database which stores player information as well and linked to any or all other player databases.

[0041] The account coordinator 108 can also be used to point one account to another. For example, a player may register at an online casino using the player's online casino account. The account coordinator 108 can use a look up (or search) and determine as associated account that can be affected by the player's online play. The online casino server 100 can then use this associated account (and/or the online casino account as well) when updating comp points earned while (or after) the player is playing (or has played).

[0042] In a further embodiment, complimentary points are not really transferred between an associated (or merged) online account and land based account, but nevertheless all of the data is accessible by a casino employee (from either the land based casino or the online casino or both). The casino employee (or an automated system) may use the total data in determining whether to offer a promotion to a player.

[0043] FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustrating records for affiliated casinos, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0044] List A 200 is a portion of a database storage storing players for casino A. Note that "Other data" denotes any additional data typically stored in such a record (such as playing history, comps received, etc). List B 202 is a portion of a database storage storing players for casino B.

[0045] Note that there is a common player in both databases, "Debbie Goldstein," and this player's record in each database contains a reference to this player's record in the other casino.

[0046] In a further embodiment of the present system, a universal list 204 can be maintained. This universal list 204 stores all players known to the affiliated casinos and lists all of their associated accounts. The universal list may be maintained by a universal database linked to other player databases.

[0047] The universal list can be indexed by a universal account number, as illustrated in the universal list 204.

[0048] The universal list 204 can also optionally be indexed by account numbers for the other casinos in a casino A indexed table 206. The casino A indexed table 206 shows the universal account number for a given account number for casino A. Alternatively, the record for each account in casino A indexed table 206 could also contain some or all of the player information in the universal list. A casino B indexed table 208 shows the universal account number for a given account number for casino G. Using these tables, a player with an account number for one casino can immediately be identified in the universal list. Whenever a player uses a player's card (or online playing account), the universal server can be queried with the player's account number for the instant casino. The universal server (linked to the universal database) can then respond with the player's up to date player information (such as comp points, etc.) from the player's record.

[0049] In this manner, a plurality of casinos (an unlimited number of casinos can be affiliated using this method), can have affiliated player accounts. Note that the universal list stores data for "Debbie Goldstein" for both casino A and casino B. In this case, each of these casinos may maintain separate data and records on this player, and the universal record can store both. Alternatively, the universal record can store just universal playing data which is updated by each casino without the need for separate data for each casinos. Thus, in this embodiment, the comp points from each casino would be aggregated. In the former embodiment, each casino can still maintain separate data (i.e. comp points, etc.), while in the latter embodiment, the player data for each casino should be the same (because they all reference the universal record, although casinos can still maintain separate data if they choose).

[0050] It is again noted the universal server and universal database (204, 206, 208) are optional, and instead of a universal server, individual casino databases can communicate records with each other as well.

[0051] FIG. 3 is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of implementing the present invention, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0052] The method starts with operation 300, wherein a party registers an account with a first entity. The first entity can for example be a land based casino (although it can also be an online casino).

[0053] The method continues to operation 302, wherein the party registers an account with a second entity. The second entity can for example be an online casino (although it can also be a land based casino), and this account information can be stored in the online casino database 101. The second entity can be affiliated by the first entity, or these entities can be owned by the same party.

[0054] The method continues to operation 304, which associates the first account with the second account. The association can be accomplished in a number of ways, as described herein. For example, when the party registers the second account he or she can manually indicate an account number of the first account. For example, if the second account is at an online based casino, the online casino server 100 can prompt the user (after registration in operation 302, or at a later time) for an account number of the first account (which can exist in the land based casino database 110).

Some type of security check can optionally be performed to ensure that the person has authority to act on behalf of the first account. For example, a security question, personal identification number (PIN), or password, can be used. Further, if the user provides his or her account number for the first account while registering for an online casino, the system can query the database storing the first account information to verify that the information (name and/or address/and or phone number, etc.) matches. If there is a match (subject to any other security checks), the account number of the first account can be accepted as being associated with this second account. Alternatively, the first account itself can be used for online play (as described herein).

[0055] Alternatively, the system can manually check the database used to store accounts by the first entity (such as the land based casino database 110) to see if there is a match, and these accounts can be automatically associated. Alternatively, the system can prompt the party if the party has another account, upon which the manual check can be performed. The association can be performed immediately upon registration of the second account, or can be performed at a later time, either by request of the party or by a review of records by either of the entities.

[0056] From operation 304, the method proceeds to operation 306, which allows transfer of points and/or information between the first account and the second account. For example, if a player earns points in the second entity, some or all of the points can be transferred from the second account to the first account. Alternatively, information from one account can be transferred to the other account. For example, player skill information stored in the first account can be transferred to the second account. The transfer can be performed for example online, using an application allowing a player to transfer points between accounts. Alternatively, information such as points earned can be transferred automatically and periodically between accounts, such as every 24 hours. When points are redeemed, both (or all) associated accounts can be adjusted to account for the redemption. For example, consider a player earns 100 points playing on land and 50 points playing online, and then the player visit the land based casino to redeem the points. The player can then be entitled to all 150 points. Upon redemption, all associated accounts can be adjust to reflect that these points have been redeemed, so all associated accounts can then reflect zero (or however many left) points.

[0057] Further, the second casino entity may view information from the first account without actually transferring information. For example, the first entity may be an online casino while the second entity may be an affiliated land based casino. The online casino can accumulate player skill information for a player. The land based casino can view the skill information when deciding whether to offer the player complimentary or the like.

[0058] FIG. 4 illustrates a method of using a same account for a land an online casino, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0059] The method starts with operation 400, which registers a first account with a land based casino. This can be done in a standard manner, and can be stored in a standard database, such as land based casino database 110.

[0060] The method then proceeds to operation 402, which identifies the player or first account to an online casino. This

operation occurs when the player initiates play at an online casino. The player can identify himself or herself to the online casino by identification information such as name, address, phone number, or the account number of the first account. This can be done at a personal computer 104 via the computer communications network 102 to the online casino server 100.

[0061] The method then proceeds to operation 404, wherein the player plays online accumulating points using the first account. The player can thus use his or her standard land based comp account while playing online. The online casino server 100 can transmit accumulated point data to the land based casino database 110 which can store the player's standard account information. The comp account number (or other identification information) can be stored on the personal computer 104, or alternatively the comp account number (or other identification information) can be stored on the online casino database 101 (or any other database).

[0062] The method then proceeds to operation 406, wherein the player can redeem the accumulated points at the first land based casino. Thus, when the player visits the land based casino, the player will have earned any points the player has previously earned at the land based casino plus any points the player earned online.

[0063] Thus, this embodiment uses one account for both land and online play. This is in contrast to a previous embodiment, which can use two associated accounts, one for online and one for land.

[0064] It is further noted that an association between land and an online casino can be performed transparently by the operators and that the player may or may not know that his or her accounts are associated. For example, consider a player that plays at a land based casino and then plays at an affiliated online based casino. The casinos can automatically associate these accounts, although may choose not to allow sharing of complimentary points. However, player skill information can be tabulated while the player plays online (or on land), which can be shared with the land based casino host. Thus, a player who plays online, but has a poor skill level, can be entitled to more complimentary or incentives than the player would have been normally entitled. The skill information can be stored for example in the online casino database 101.

[0065] In yet a further embodiment, an association between a land account and an online account can be associated in the player's accounts (either or both), but both account information may be kept entirely separate. The association can be used to send promotions or for other marketing efforts. For example, if a player has both a land based account and an online account, then either casino (or one if it is the same entity) may send special offers for players that play both online and land.

[0066] It is also noted that the present invention is not limited to associate accounts between an online casino and a land based casino, but can associate accounts between two or more land based casinos, two or more online casinos, or in any combination.

[0067] It is noted that in an embodiment of the present invention, complimentary points can be earned remotely without the player having to physically present his or her comp card. The comp card account number can be stored

either locally (on the player's hard drive on the personal computer **104**), or remotely (in a player record on a remote database such as the online casino database **101**). Thus, unlike the current art, the player does not always need a physical comp card to earn points for incentives. Table I below illustrates an example player record, according to an embodiment of the present invention. Note that some fields in table I are optional, and additional fields known in the art may not be included.

TABLE I

Player ID:	BigluckyJoe
Address:	3 oak street
Comp points:	1055.4
Associated comp account:	200443
Casino for above account:	Lady Luck Casino

[**0068**] Thus, according to Table I, a player record can be stored (either on the player's hard drive on the personal computer **104**), or remotely (in a player record on a remote database such as the online casino database **101**). If the data is stored locally, then some fields like the comp points should still be stored remotely because it may be subject to player modification. The player ID can be an assigned ID or an ID chosen by the player for easy recollection. Other information can be stored in the record, such as the player's address, and any other information known in the art. The number of comp points can also be stored. An associated comp account number is designated, which is an account number for the player's comp account at another casino (such as a land casino known as "Lady Luck."

[**0069**] This system can work as follows. A player can log into his or her online casino account using their personal computer, using the player's ID (e.g. "BigluckyJoe"). The system can then retrieve the player's associated comp account number. This number can be stored in the player's database remote database record, or locally (e.g. on the player's hard drive). If this number is not stored locally then the player can have access to his or her associated account regardless of the remote computer the player is using.

[**0070**] In an embodiment, comp points may not be stored in the online player record illustrated in Table I, but instead comp points already earned (from play at both the land and online casino) can be retrieved from the remote land based casino database **110**. In this embodiment, there is no separate tally of comp points for the online and land based casino. Comp points earned from either are accumulated to the player's total. In a further embodiment, a separate tally of comp points can be maintained for the online and land casino, and these can be transferred, merged, or synchronized at a later time.

[**0071**] When the player plays online, comps points can be accumulated. These comp points can be accumulated in the player's standard account, in the player's associated account, or both accounts. If the comp points are being accumulated in the player's associated account, then upon every comp point earned (or after a predetermined number of comp points or after a session), the comp points earned are transmitted to a remote database (for example land based casino database **110**) along with the associated comp account. The player ID information can also be transmitted as well for security or other purposes. Thus, the player can

now earn comp points playing from a remote computer that are redeemable at a land based casino as if the player had earned these points at the land based casino itself.

[**0072**] It is further noted that it may be possible that a player may maintain two separate accounts, one for a land based casino and one for an online based casino. At some point in time, the player may wish to merge these accounts. Comp points earned from either account can be combined and transferred into one account. In the future, comp points earned by play either at the online or land based casino can then be accumulated into only a single account. For example, if a player has an online account and a land account, each with separately earned comp points. The comp points from the online account can be transferred to the land account, and the player online record can now reflect an association with the land account in which future comp points earned online will be distributed to the other land account.

[**0073**] In yet a further embodiment, two separate accounts may be maintained. However, at any point in time, a player may manually request a transfer of points. For example, a player has earned 100 comp points at a land based casino and 200 comp points at an affiliated online based casino. The player then wishes to visit the land based casino and wishes to redeem his points earned online for room, food, beverage, or any other incentive, at the land based casino. The player can request a transfer of comp points at the online based casino. The online server can then prompt for (or may already have) the player's land based account number. The player can then transfer some or all of the points to that account. In this case, the player can transfer the 200 comp points he or she has earned at the online casino to the land based account for a total of 300 comp points, while the player will then have 0 points at the online casino. The 300 points can then be used by the player to apply to a room or other incentives, or can be used by the land casino host in evaluating the player's value to the casino.

[**0074**] Before effectuating such a transfer, the system may query the remote land based casino database with the land based account number and player identification information, so that the land casino database can confirm or provide information to confirm that the player is the same player that owns the land based casino account. Transfers may be allowed either way or one way. For example, the system may be set up to allow transfer only from an online account to a land account, but not the other way around. Or transfers can be allowed in either direction. Note that a transfer of points is different than a merger of accounts. Two separate accounts may still be active and used to accumulate points.

[**0075**] Further, there may be an exchange rate between different casino accounts. For example, a comp point earned at an online casino may not have the same value as a comp point earned at an affiliated land based casino. Thus, when comp points are transferred, the number of comp points can be multiplied by a conversion constant to reflect the value of the points after the transfer.

[**0076**] Further, it is not necessary that the same player be associated with himself at other casinos. A husband and wife can be associated with each other and share player data and comp points. In this embodiment, a player record for a husband will designate an association with his wife's account, and vice versa. When comp points are queried, redeemed, or reviewed by a casino personnel, the database may check for associates and aggregate comp points

between the associated husband and wife, depending on the configuration of the system. For example, the system may allow a husband and wife to maintain and view their comp points separately, but can aggregate them upon redemption. Thus, all of the methods and apparatus described herein can also be used to affiliate two accounts owned by different people, such as a husband and wife. These affiliated accounts can be used by a single entity (e.g. a land based casino) or across different entities.

[0077] A husband and wife can maintain two separate (but associated accounts) as described herein. A husband and wife can also maintain a single account between both people.

[0078] Note that this differs from a system in which multiple casinos can use the same player's card. In this case, the player's account number is one and the same, and there is typically only one account and one database.

[0079] Alternatively, a husband and wife (or other related parties) can have separate but associated accounts. The associated accounts can be designated in the respective player records as described herein. Associated accounts can share and/or transfer account information and/or complimentary points. For example, points that a husband earns can be redeemed by the wife's account. The wife's account will designate an association with the husband's account, thus allowing points to be transferred.

[0080] Thus, an advantage of the present system is that multiple casinos (whether land based or online) can associate or share accounts, providing players a more simple system with more flexible capabilities.

[0081] Skill can be measured by recording a player's playing decisions (such as hit or stand, etc.) and comparing the actions with the optimal decision that would maximize the player's expected return.

[0082] All of the promotional methods described in the document entitled, "A CASHLESS SLOT MACHINE AND/OR AMUSEMENT DEVICE WITH SPECIAL FEATURES," can be offered and targeted based on any data collected as described in the current document. For example, a player can play at an online casino. The casino can determine that the player's skill (or any other characteristic of the player's play, such as any characteristic described herein or the prior document) is desirable to the casino, so the affiliated land-based casino can offer the player a promotion, such a special ticket for playing video poker (or any other type of special ticket as described therein).

[0083] The currently described system is especially attractive for attracting international players from a country where online gambling is legal to US based land casinos which have a legal online casino affiliate. The currently described system is also attractive for casinos in countries wherein taking land and online bets are both legal.

[0084] It is also noted that any and/or all of the above embodiments, configurations, variations of the present invention described above can mixed and matched and used in any combination with one another. Any claim herein can be combined with any others (unless the results are nonsensical). Further, any mathematical formula given above also includes its mathematical equivalents, and also variations thereof such as multiplying any of the individual terms of a formula by a constant(s) or other variable.

[0085] Moreover, any description of a component or embodiment herein also includes hardware, software, and

configurations which already exist in the prior art and may be necessary to the operation of such component(s) or embodiment(s).

[0086] The many features and advantages of the invention are apparent from the detailed specification and, thus, it is intended by the appended claims to cover all such features and advantages of the invention that fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation illustrated and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:

a player registering a first account with a land based casino;

the player registering a second account with an online based casino; and

associating the first account and the second account.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

transferring complimentary points earned from the second account to the first account.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

offering a player at the land based casino a promotion or incentive based on complimentary points earned from the second account.

4. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

storing player skill information reflecting the player's transactions at the online based casino in the second account; and

sharing the player's skill information with the land based casino.

5. A method as recited in claim 4, further comprising:

deciding to a special promotion to the player for the land based casino using the player's skill information.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

allowing the player to redeem complimentary points earned from the online casino at an establishment related to the land based casino.

7. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the establishment is a restaurant.

8. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the establishment is a hotel.

9. A method as recited in claim 8, wherein the player can receive a free or discounted room at the hotel based on the complimentary points earned from the online casino.

10. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the associating prompts the player for a land based casino account number for the player.

11. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the associating automatically searches a database for the land based casino to find an account for the player at the land based casino.

12. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising reviewing information in the second account by an employee of the land based casino in order to determine whether to offer the player a promotion by the land based casino.

13. A method, comprising:

a player registering an account at a land based casino;
the player signing onto an online based casino;
the player wagering at the online based casino; and
the player earning complimentary points for the account based on the wagering.

14. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein there is only one account for the player for both the land based casino and the online based casino.

15. A method as recited in claim 13, wherein there is one account for the land based casino and one account for the online based casino, and both accounts are associated with each other.

16. A method, comprising:

registering a first account at a casino by a first person;
registering a second account at the casino by a second person; and

associating the first account and the second account.

17. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein the first person is a husband and the second person is the husband's wife.

18. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein complimentary points earned in the first account can be transferred to the second account.

19. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein complimentary points earned in the first account can be redeemed by the second person using a player's card owned by the second person.

20. A method as recited in claim 16, wherein complimentary points earned in the first account can be redeemed by the second person based on the associating.

21. A method, comprising:

registering a first account by a player at a land based casino;

registering a second account by the player at an online based casino affiliated with the land based casino;

allowing the player to play at the online based casino;

accumulating skill information regarding the player's play at the online based casino; and

transmitting the skill information to the land based casino.

22. A method as recited in claim 21, further comprising associating the first account with the second account.

23. A method, comprising:

registering a player account for a player for an online casino;

allowing the player to play at the online casino from a remote computer and to accumulate comp points; and

offering the player to visit a land based casino affiliated with the online casino and to redeem accumulated comp points at the land based casino.

24. A method, comprising:

logging onto an online casino using a player's player identification;

retrieving a player record of the player in a remote database using the player identification;

retrieving an associated loyalty account number identifying an associated loyalty account for an associated land based casino from the player record;

allowing the player to play a wagering game;

accumulating complimentary points based on the play of the wagering game in the associated loyalty account using the associated loyalty account number; and

allowing the player to redeem accumulated complimentary points in person at the associated land based casino.

25. A method, comprising:

registering a first loyalty account at a first casino;

registering a second loyalty account at a second casino;

accumulating a first number of comp points in the first loyalty account;

accumulating a second number of comp points in the second loyalty account; and

transferring the first number of comp points in the first loyalty account to the second loyalty account.

26. A method as recited in claim 25, wherein the first casino is an online casino and the second casino is a land based casino.

27. A method as recited in claim 26, wherein the first casino and the second casino are part of the same entity.

28. A method as recited in claim 25, wherein the transferring comprises converting the first number of points to an adjusted number of comp points, adding the adjusted number of comp points to the second loyalty account, and zeroing out the first number of comp points in the first loyalty account.

29. A computer readable storage medium controlling a computer to perform a method comprising:

registering a first account by a player at a land based casino;

registering a second account by the player at an online based casino affiliated with the land based casino;

allowing the player to play at the online based casino;

accumulating skill information regarding the player's play at the online based casino; and

transmitting the skill information to the land based casino.

30. An apparatus, comprising:

a first player database associated with a land based casino storing player information for the land based casino;

a communication unit connected to a second player database storing player information for an online casino;

a data integration unit receiving the player information for the online casino and receiving the player information for the land based casino; and

an output unit outputting player summary data incorporating the player information for the online casino and the player information for the land based casino.

31. An apparatus as recited in claim 30, wherein the output unit is located in a land based casino.