A method of ordering food from an electronic gaming console includes providing a networked video gaming system including at least one gaming console for displaying a game to the player. The method further includes displaying a menu on the gaming console enabling the player to play a game and to order food. A player selects food items the player wishes to order and selects whether the player wishes to pay with cash or credit. The food is delivered to the player within the gaming establishment without the player having to "cash out" or leave the gaming console.
Please enter your control number, then press enter.
FIG. 6

START

SELECT MENU ORDER OPTION

INPUT ORDER

INPUT DELIVERY LOCATION

SELECT PAYMENT OPTION

FINALIZE ORDER

RECEIVE DELIVERY

STOP
FIG. 7

START 505

DISPLAY AVAILABLE FOOD SOURCES 510

RECEIVE FOOD SOURCE SELECTION 515

DISPLAY AVAILABLE FOOD ITEMS 520

RECEIVE ONE OR MORE FOOD ITEM SELECTIONS 525

DISPLAY INDICIA INDICATING SELECTED FOOD ITEMS AND TOTAL PRICE 530

RECEIVING ORDER FINALIZATION 535

END 540
MENU SYSTEM FOR ORDERING FOOD DELIVERY FROM AN ELECTRONIC GAMING DEVICE

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present application relates generally to a menu ordering system for use on gaming devices, and more specifically to a menu system for ordering food delivery from a mobile handheld or stationary electronic gaming device.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Electronic gaming devices generally involve a player interacting with an electronic gaming console displaying one or more games currently in play. The gaming consoles include an input system for inputting commands to affect the game play. Preferably, the input system includes a touch screen input system. Some other example input systems include buttons, switches, a mouse, track ball, light pen, keyboard, and any other such input device.

[0003] Some electronic gaming devices are stationary, requiring the player to sit at a predetermined physical location within the gaming establishment. Other electronic gaming devices are mobile, enabling a player to roam around and choose a seat (or stand) within a predetermined physical area. In one non-limiting example, a player can choose to sit at any table within a Bingo Hall and may switch tables during the game. Mobile gaming devices also advantageously enable gaming establishments to have fewer gaming consoles than available seats, thereby reducing expenses.

[0004] When playing these electronic games, the player may become hungry or thirsty. Typically, the player must stop game play and leave the area in which the fixed gaming consoles are located to obtain food or drink. In some cases, the player also will leave the area in which the mobile gaming consoles function. Typically, the player must “cash out,” thereby transferring the player’s available credits into cash when leaving the gaming areas. A player can then use any of the cash won during the game play to pay for food and/or drink.

SUMMARY

[0005] In some embodiments, a player orders food from a menu on an electronic gaming console coupled to a networked gaming system. The method includes receiving login information from the player when the player logs onto the gaming console. Login information includes credits available to the player. The method further includes displaying a menu on the gaming console enabling the player to choose from the following options: to play a game, to log off, to cash out, and to order food. The player is prompted to enter order information into the gaming console in response to the player selecting the order food option from the menu. Menu order information is sent from the gaming console to a food source (e.g., a restaurant or kitchen) and the food source preferably delivers the order to the player.

[0006] In one embodiment, the menu displayed on a gaming console includes a list of food sources, an itemized bill display, a console location display, an available credits display, an order button and a cancel button. A player may order food items from one or more food sources by selecting indicia on the menu representing the food items.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated herein and constitute 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. A brief description of the drawings is as follows:

[0008] FIG. 1 illustrates a schematic diagram of a networked electronic gaming system according to the present invention;

[0009] FIG. 2 illustrates an example log-in screen including a touch screen key pad for use in entering a control number associated with the player;

[0010] FIG. 3 illustrates an example display screen on an electronic gaming device displayed in response to a player selecting a food delivery option;

[0011] FIG. 4 illustrates an example display screen for display on an electronic gaming device;

[0012] FIG. 4A illustrates an example interface through which a player can input her location;

[0013] FIG. 5 illustrates an alternative example display screen for display on an electronic gaming device;

[0014] FIG. 6 illustrates an operation flow chart for ordering food delivery according to one embodiment of the disclosure;

[0015] FIG. 7 illustrates an operation flow chart for providing an interactive menu by which a player can order food delivery over a gaming console;

[0016] FIG. 8 illustrates an administrative interface with which a user can create a menu.

[0017] FIG. 9 illustrates editing a name of a menu item using the administrative interface of FIG. 8;

[0018] FIG. 10 illustrates editing a price of the menu item using the administrative interface of FIG. 8;

[0019] FIG. 11 illustrates editing a description of the menu item using the administrative interface of FIG. 8;

[0020] FIG. 12 illustrates editing the source of a graphical depiction of the menu item using the administrative interface of FIG. 8, and

[0021] FIG. 13 illustrates displaying a preview of a rendered menu using the administrative interface of FIG. 8.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0022] Reference will now be made in detail to the exemplary aspects of the present invention that are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. Wherever possible, the same reference numbers will be used throughout the drawings to refer to the same or like parts.

[0023] FIG. 1 illustrates an example networked gaming system 10 including a server 15 coupled to fixed electronic gaming consoles 25 and to wireless electronic gaming consoles 35. The fixed gaming consoles 25 are arranged in one or more gaming rooms 20 within a gaming establishment. Typically, fixed gaming consoles 25 are arranged in
rows within the rooms. The gaming consoles are stationary, and hence, the position of each gaming console within each room is always known.

Mobile gaming consoles, such as wireless consoles, are issued to players who can roam between and within gaming rooms of the gaming establishment. Consequently, the mobile consoles are typically distributed throughout one or more gaming rooms. Because the consoles are wireless, each console can move about the rooms, enabling players to select desired seating within each room, to switch seating within the room, and to roam between rooms. For example, a first mobile gaming console is shown in a first location within gaming room by a solid line designation. The player to whom console was issued can subsequently roam to a second position as indicated by the dashed line designation.

Players play electronic games using the gaming consoles. In various embodiments, electronic games can include Slots, Bingo, Pachinko, Poker, and other such games. In some embodiments, the gaming consoles also enable players to enter information and customize player and display preferences prior to gaming. In some embodiments, gaming system also includes a central database storage in which player information is stored, so that repeat players may log-in to retrieve previously input player information.

In some embodiments, one or more food sources are electronically coupled to the central server. In other embodiments (not shown), the food sources are electronically coupled to each of the player consoles individually. The food sources are configured to receive order information from a player and to deliver the ordered food to the player. In some embodiments, the order information is routed from the gaming consoles through the central server to the food source. In other embodiments, the order information is sent directly from the gaming consoles to the food source. In various embodiments, the order is printed out, displayed on a terminal, or otherwise displayed to staff at the food source. The process for placing an order will be described in more detail herein.

Still referring to FIG. 1, for a player to participate in play on the gaming system, the player needs to have purchased, been given, or otherwise acquired credits for use during game play. Players generally use credits to purchase game play time and for wagering on the outcome of the games. Once this acquisition has been accomplished, the player may log onto gaming system to play via gaming consoles.

Referring now to FIG. 2, in some embodiments, when a player registers and purchases credits, the player is issued a control number that identifies the player and enables the gaming system to track the player's available credits. The control number enables the player to log-in to any stationary gaming console in the gaming establishment. FIG. 2 illustrates an example log-in screen including a touch screen key pad for use in entering the control number. When the control number has been entered, the player is allowed to play the game, in this case, Bingo.

In an alternative embodiment, a player is issued a wireless gaming console when the player registers. Credits acquired by the player can be hardwired or otherwise input onto the gaming console at the time of issuance. In some embodiments, a player can input additional credits into the console by returning to the point of issuance. The player typically uses the same gaming console until the player leaves the gaming establishment. In other embodiments, the gaming system tracks a player's available credits on an electronic card, a punch card, or other such tracking device.

Referring now to FIGS. 3-7, a player has a variety of options after logging into the console. In some embodiments, the player's options include playing the game, changing personal or display settings, and purchasing more credits. As shown in FIG. 3, another option includes ordering food from one or more food sources. FIG. 3 illustrates an example display screen configured for display on an electronic gaming device. The display screen is generally displayed in response to a player selecting a food delivery menu option from an electronic gaming console.

The example display screen includes a primary frame, an itemized bill display, a console location display, an available credits display, an order button, and a cancel button. In some embodiments, the primary frame includes one or more advertisements for various food sources capable of delivering food to the player within the gaming establishment. In one embodiment, each advertisement is linked to an order page configured specifically for the advertised food source. In another embodiment, the advertisements merely let the player know which food sources are participating in the food delivery service for the gaming establishment. The itemized bill display, which will be discussed in more detail herein, is shown as blank because food has not yet been ordered.

The console location display indicates the location of the player's gaming console, and hence the location of the player. In some embodiments, the location of the gaming console is entered by the player when the player places a food order. The player can specify the location of the fixed console by entering a console number. Typically, the player specifies a location for the wireless console by entering a table and/or seat number in an input box. For example, in FIG. 3, a player has entered Table. In other embodiments, a player also will input a gaming room number.

In other embodiments, however, the location of the gaming console can be entered automatically without receiving input from the player. For example, when the player orders from a fixed gaming console, the physical location of the console is known to the gaming system. Mobile gaming consoles can also be configured to enter their locations automatically. For example, a mobile gaming console having a position sensing, locating, or tracking system (FIG. 1). Examples of a tracking system include a GPS system and an RFID system. Triangulation of wireless transmissions may also be used to track the location of the mobile gaming console.

The current credits display indicates the available credits purchased or otherwise obtained by the player. In some embodiments, the player can use the available credits to pay for food ordered by the player. In one such
embodiment, a delivery tip can also be taken out of the available credits. In another such embodiment, a delivery tip is paid in cash by the player when the food is delivered. In other embodiments, the player uses cash, check, or credit card to pay for the ordered food.

[0035] Referring now to FIG. 4, in some embodiments, a player proceeds to a menu enabling the player to choose a particular food source 40 from a list of food sources 212. FIG. 4 illustrates an example menu display screen 200 for display on an electronic gaming console 25, 35. The menu display screen 200 indicates a list 212 of food source entries 211. The list 212 includes one or more listings 211A-211C of food sources 40 capable of delivering food to the player. The player can view an interactive menu for each of the various food sources 40 by selecting the corresponding listing 211A-211C.

[0036] The menu for each food source listing 212a-212d is displayed in a frame 210. Each menu includes one or more menu indicia 214 indicating a food item that can be ordered from the food source 40. In some embodiments, each menu indicia 214 includes a selection input 215, graphic indicia 216, text indicia 217, and price indicia 218. The graphic and text indicia 216, 217 indicate the particular food item associated with the menu indicia 214. In some other embodiments, menu indicia 214 do not include graphic indicia 216, but do include text indicia 217. In still other embodiments, menu indicia 214 do not include text indicia 217, but do include graphic indicia 216. The price indicia 218 indicate the price of the food item associated with the menu indicia 214.

[0037] A player orders particular food items by selecting (e.g., touching, clicking on, etc.) the menu indicia 214 associated with the food items. In one embodiment, the player selects menu indicia 214 by touching the selection input 215 of the menu indicia 214 with the player's finger on a touch screen. In various other embodiments, the player selects the menu indicia 214 using a mouse, light pen, or other similar interactive peripheral. In one embodiment, a check mark or other similar indicia is displayed over the selection input 215 or elsewhere on the menu indicia 214 when one of the menu indicia 214 is selected.

[0038] Selecting the menu indicia 214 typically causes the price 218 of the selected food item to be displayed in the itemized bill frame 120. In some embodiments, text 122 indicating the food item selected by the player is displayed on one side of the frame 120. Additional indicia 124 indicating the price of each selected item and the total amount due is displayed on the opposite side of the frame 120. In one embodiment, sales tax can optionally be displayed. Some embodiments of the itemized bill frame 120 are scrollable or otherwise able to display lengthy orders legibly.

[0039] As discussed above, the player also indicates to what location the food should be delivered during the ordering process. For example, FIG. 4A displays an example input interface 600 with which location information can be provided by the player. The input interface 600 is typically displayed in response to a player touching or selecting the location display 130. The input interface 600 includes touch buttons 602 or other indicia by which the player can enter her location. The location can be displayed in a display window 604. To complete the entry, the player can touch or otherwise select an "Enter" button 606. Alternatively, the user can select the "Cancel" button 607 to return to the previous menu.

[0040] Referring back to FIG. 4, when the player has finished selecting food items from the menu of a food source 40, the player may then select a payment option to pay for the food. One payment option includes paying cash when the food is delivered. Another option includes paying for the selected food using the player's available credits if sufficient credits are available. In some embodiments, the player's available credits are displayed on an available credit display 140.

[0041] If the player has finished selecting the desired food items using the menu indicia 214, has selected a payment option, and, if necessary, has indicated a delivery location (e.g., using the console location input box 135), then the player can finalize the order by selecting the order option 150. Selecting the order option 150 sends the order to the food source 40. If the player chose to pay using available credits, then the gaming system 10 debits the appropriate amount of credits from the player's account. The player's available credits minus the debited amount appear in the available credit display 140.

[0042] In various embodiments, the order option 150 can include a button, a listing in a drop-down menu, a radio button, or any other means by which a player can indicate to the gaming system 10 that the player wishes to finalize an order. The player may then return to the gaming screen (not shown) and continue playing a game while waiting for the food delivery.

[0043] In one embodiment, if a player wishes to cancel her order, change the contents of her order, or change her selected payment option, then she may select the cancel option 160 to undo her current order. For example, the cancel option 160 can include a touch screen button that the player presses with her finger. In another embodiment, if the player decides not to finalize her order, then the player presses a back option 170 to return to the game or a previous menu screen without placing an order or debiting her credits.

[0044] Referring now to FIG. 5, in some embodiments, a player may proceed from the initial order screen 100, as shown in FIG. 3, to a menu screen 300 customized for a particular food source 40. FIG. 5 illustrates an alternative order menu 300 configured for display on an electronic gaming console 25, 35. According to some embodiments, the alternative order menu 300 still includes the itemized bill display 120, the console location display 130, the available credits display 140, the order option 150, and the cancellation option 160. In one embodiment, the alternative order menu 300 also includes a back button 170.

[0045] Alternative order menu 300 includes a list 314 of food items displayed in the primary frame 310. Each entry 311 in the list 314 of food items includes selection indicia 315, optional graphic indicia (not shown), identity indicia 316, and price information 318. The entries 311 also can include a textual description 317 of the indicated food item. In some embodiments, the primary frame 310 is scrollable or otherwise able to display lengthy menu listings legibly within the primary frame 310. Order menu 300 otherwise functions generally similarly to order menu 200 discussed above with respect to FIG. 4.
Referring now to FIG. 6, an operational flow chart for ordering food using an interactive menu, such as menus 200, 300, is shown. The ordering process 400 begins at start module 405 and proceeds to a first select operation 410 in which a player selects a menu order option on her gaming console 25, 35, thereby indicating that she wishes to order food. A first input order operation 415 inputs the player's order substantially as discussed above.

A second input operation 420 inputs the current location of the player. When the order is finalized, the food will be delivered to the input location. As discussed above, in some embodiments, the location will be entered automatically by the gaming console 25, 35 or by the game system 10.

In a second select operation 425, the player selects a payment option by which the player will pay for the food. If the player has a sufficient amount of credit available, the player may select to debit from her available credit to pay for the food. The player may also choose to pay with cash once the food is delivered. In some embodiments, a tip can optionally be debited from the player's credit account.

The player finalizes her order in finalize operation 430. Finalizing an order causes the order to be sent to a food source 40. If the player chooses to pay using available credits, then finalizing the order also causes the appropriate amount of credits to be debited from the player's credit account. The player is then given the option to play a game while waiting for delivery of the food. The ordering process 400 ends at stop module 440 after the player receives the delivery in receive operation 435.

Referring now to FIG. 7, an operation flow chart for providing an interactive menu over a gaming console is shown. The process 500 for providing the menu begins at start module 505 and proceeds to a first display operation 510, in which available food sources 40 are displayed on the electronic gaming console 25, 35. The gaming console 25, 35 receives the player's selection of a food source 40 from which the player wishes to order in receive operation 515.

In a second display operation 520, the gaming console 25, 35 presents a choice of various food items that can be ordered by the player from the food source 40. The console receives one or more selections of food items by the player in a second receive operation 525. When a food item selection is received, the gaming console 25, 35 typically displays selection indicia indicating the food item has been selected in a second display operation 530. Displaying selection indicia enables a player to verify whether the gaming console 25, 35 has understood her order. Indicia indicating the price of each food item and the total price of the player's current order are also displayed. The order information is transmitted to the food source 40 when the finalize order selection is received in a third receive operation 535. The process ends at module 540.

Referring now to FIGS. 8-13, administrators of the gaming system 10 or of the individual food sources 40 can create the menus to be displayed to players using an interactive administrative interface 800. The interface 800 presents an interactive screen 810 and a preview screen 840 to the administrator. The interactive screen 810 displays a name and a price for each food item to be included on a menu. A textual description and/or a pathname for a source of a graphical depiction of the food item can also be displayed.

The interactive screen 810 provides an interface enabling a user to add and/or delete food items from a menu. To add a food item to a menu, the user enters a name and a price for the item (see FIGS. 9 and 10). The user also can enter a description of the food item (FIG. 11) or a graphical depiction of the food item (FIG. 12). The menu can be saved after changes have been made. A preview of the menu can be rendered and displayed to the user in the preview screen 840 (FIG. 13).

As shown in FIG. 12, choosing to add a graphical depiction of the food item causes the interactive interface 800 to display a second interface 830 enabling the user to browse for images stored on the computer system on which the first interface 800 is being executed. In some embodiments, the user can also browse for images stored on other computer systems communicatively coupled to the computer system on which the interface 800 is being executed. In certain embodiments, the selected graphic can be rendered and displayed within the window of the second interface 830.

The above specification, examples and data provide a complete description of the manufacture and use of the invention. Since many embodiments of the invention can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, the invention resides in the claims hereinafter appended.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of ordering food, the method comprising:
   - displaying an interactive menu on a networked electronic gaming console to a player, the interactive menu enabling the player to choose whether to participate in an electronic game or to view a food ordering menu;
   - receiving selection information from the player indicating the player chooses to view the food ordering menu;
   - displaying the food ordering menu to the player;
   - receiving menu order information from the player via the networked electronic gaming console, the menu order information including at least one food item selection, a payment option selection, and a location of the player; and
   - transmitting the food order information to a food source, the food source delivering to the player a food item indicated by the food item selection.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising
   - receiving login information from the player when the player logs into the networked electronic gaming console; and
   - tracking credit available to the player using the login information.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein displaying the food ordering menu comprises prompting the player to select one of a cash option and a debit payment option to pay for the food items.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising debiting the credit available to the player to pay for the food item in response to the player selecting the debit payment option.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the gaming console is mobile.
6. The method of claim 5, further comprising determining the location of the player using a tracking system of the electronic gaming console.

7. The method of claim 5, further comprising receiving information from the player indicating the location of the player.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving selection information from the player indicating the player chooses to participate in an electronic game.

9. A system comprising:

   a computing system storing menu information for at least one food source, the menu information indicating food items the food source can deliver to players within a gaming establishment;

   a first plurality of electronic gaming consoles communicatively coupled to the computing system, each of the electronic gaming consoles being configured to enable a player to participate in an electronic game, each of the electronic gaming consoles further being configured to enable a player to view the menu information stored on the computing system and to input order information, the order information including at least one food item selection;

   at least one food source communicatively coupled to the computing system, the food source capable of receiving the order information from the electronic gaming consoles, the food source delivering the food item selection to a player in response to receiving the order information from one of the electronic gaming consoles.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the electronic gaming consoles of the first plurality are mobile electronic gaming consoles.

11. The system of claim 10, further comprising a second plurality of electronic gaming consoles, the gaming consoles of the second plurality being stationary electronic gaming consoles.

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