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(54) **VISUAL FIX POINTS AND METHODS FOR
DISPLAY OF GAME DATA**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A visual fixed point apparatus and method for presenting a player with visually coherent game type or game variant changes is disclosed. The display is logically considered a collection of visual elements or points. When a player requests to see an alternate game or game variant as compared to the game currently being played, the alternate's properties are shown using as many unchanged visual points as reasonably possible.

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**Game Device With
Visual Fixed Points**

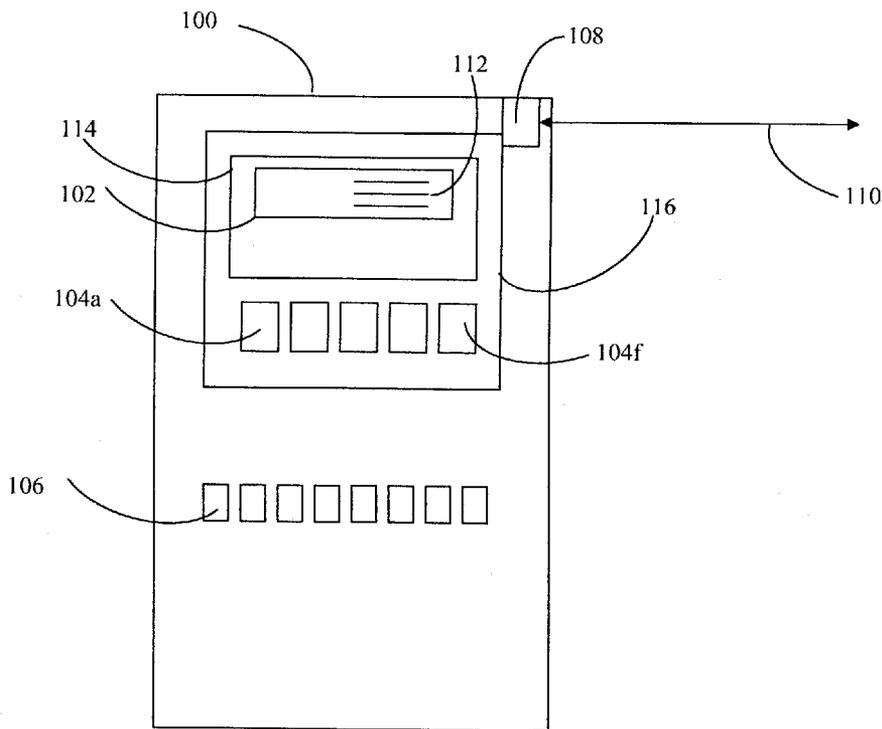


FIGURE 1
Game Device With
Visual Fixed Points

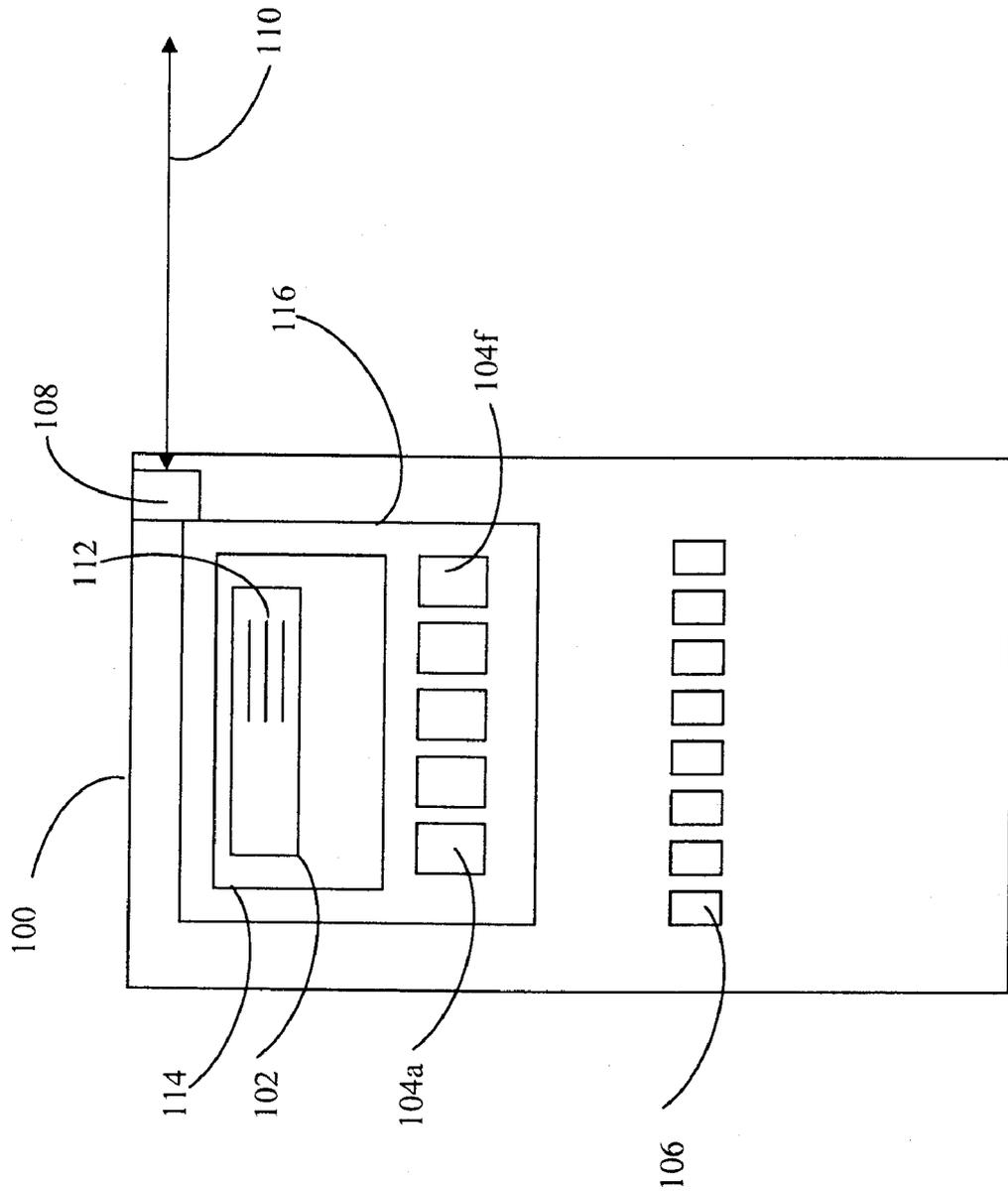


FIGURE 2
Method For Using Visual Fix Points
Allowing Easy Comparison Between Choices

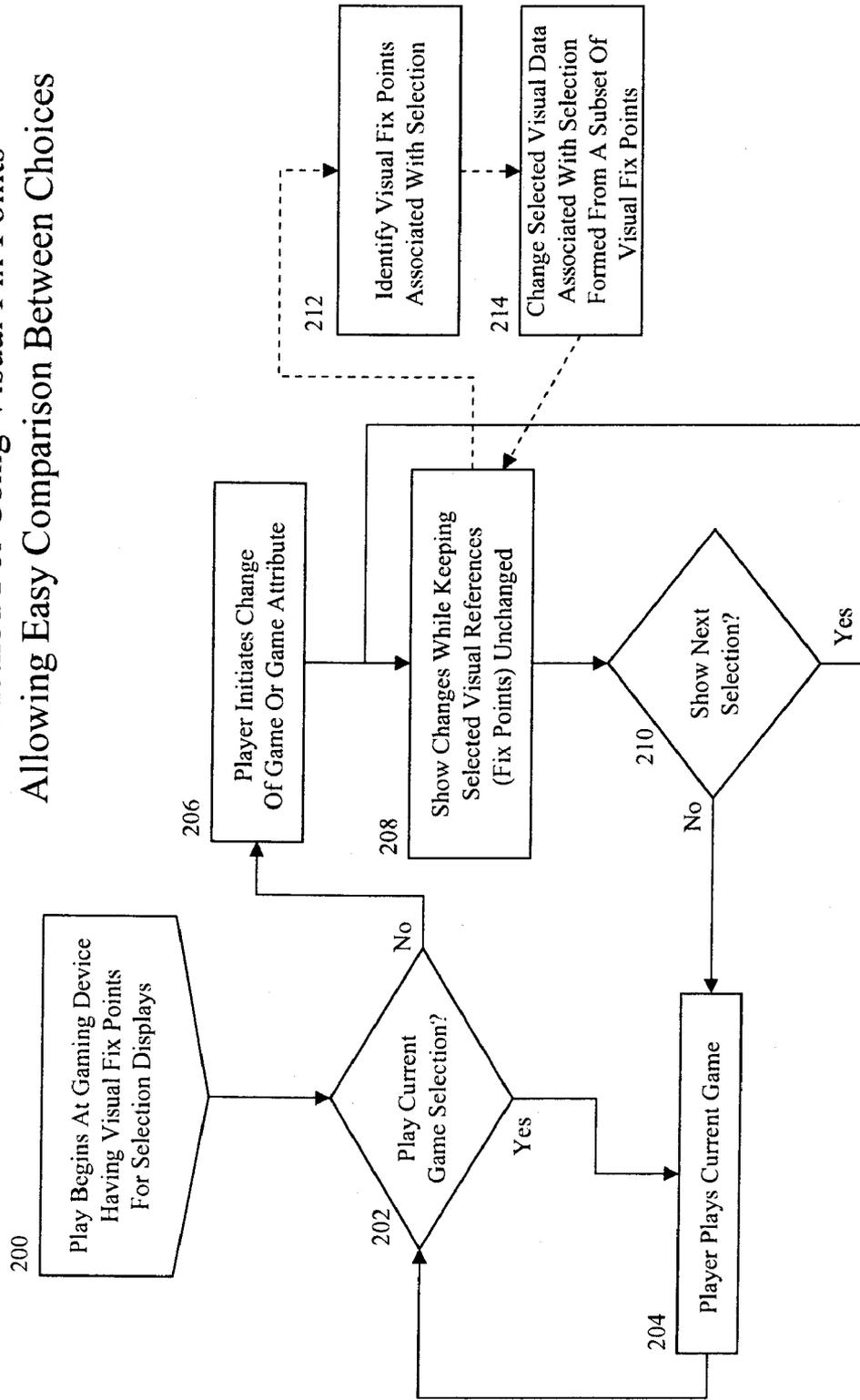


FIGURE 3

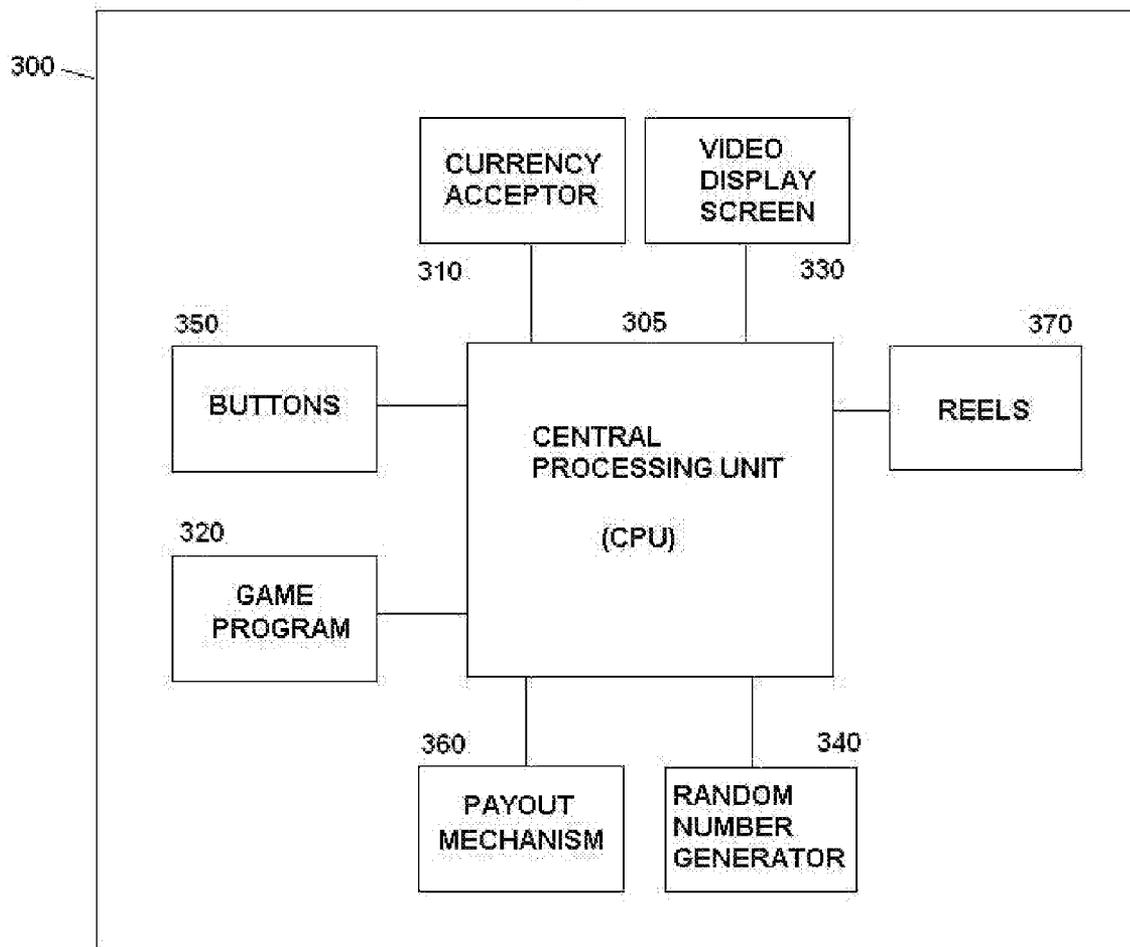
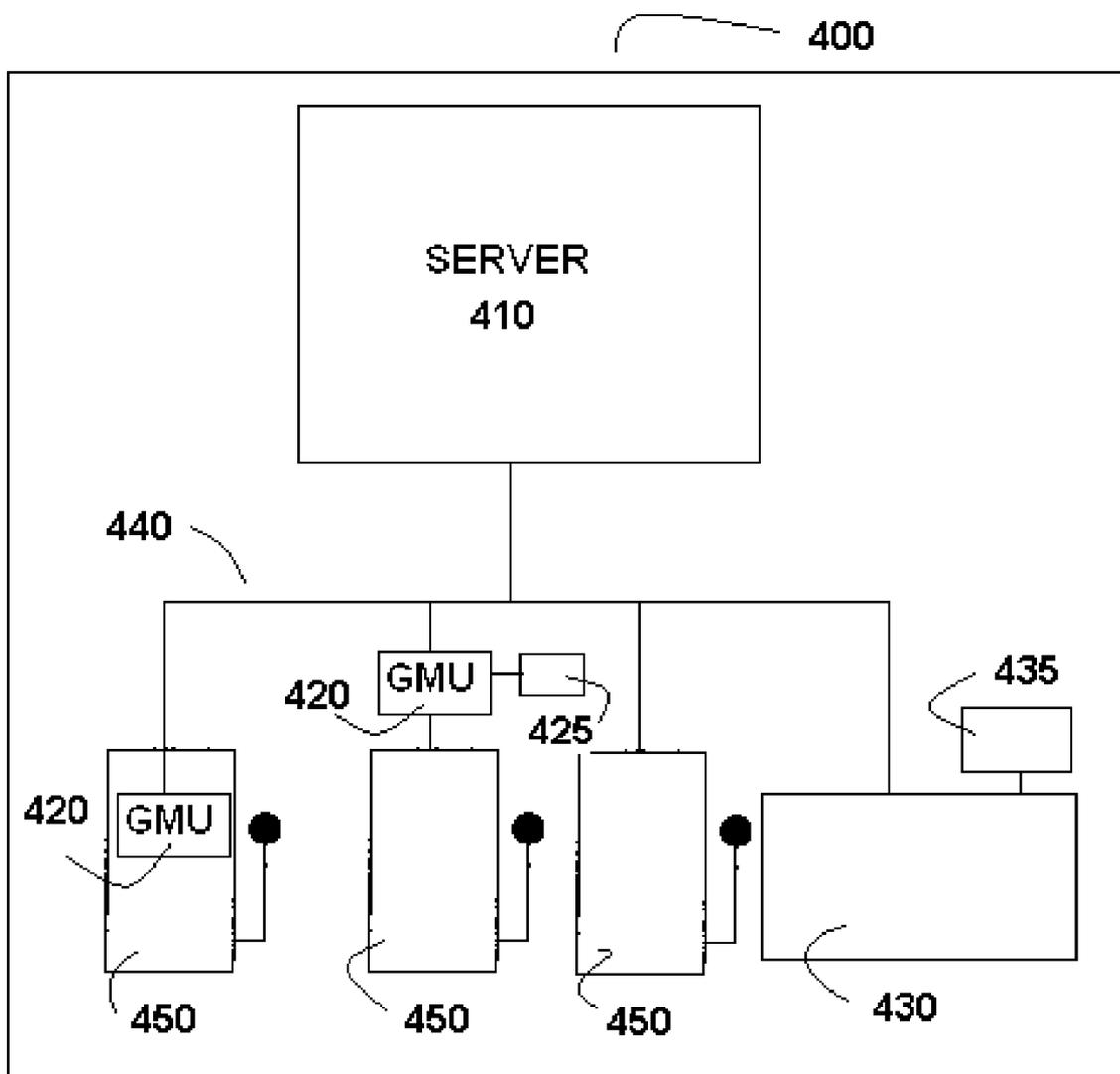


FIGURE 4



VISUAL FIX POINTS AND METHODS FOR DISPLAY OF GAME DATA

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority from provisional application 60/716,744 filed on Sep. 12, 2005, hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention pertains generally to game devices, systems, and methods. More particularly, the present invention relates to a method and apparatus for providing players visual feedback.

[0004] 2. Description of Related Art

[0005] Game devices such as slot machines are well known and are in widespread usage throughout the world. The common form of various game devices is a cabinet with a plurality of rotating reels or a video screen replicating rotating reels. In such devices, it is common to have a player interface with various options for the player to exercise.

[0006] Gaming machines which have the ability to provide players with a choice of games, choice of paytables, or similar alternatives require a player to select from a series of menus when making changes to their game play. In these cases, difficulties may be encountered by players in making comparisons between their choices, especially when the variations are visually minor (although perhaps important to game play or winning percentages and the like). Hence, there is a need for player interfaces that provide players with visually easy ways to discern differences between gaming variations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] In one aspect of the invention, a visual fix point apparatus and method for use with game devices, systems, and methods is provided to enable players to easily and understandably view current or selected game states. The visual fix point apparatus and method includes displaying selected variable data corresponding to the game, gaming machine, or game system in defined fields or viewable areas.

[0008] Further, objects, features and advantages of various embodiments of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed disclosure, taken in conjunction with the accompanying sheets of drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a simple block diagram of an example game machine with visual fix points.

[0010] FIG. 2 is a flow diagram illustrating an example process for displaying visual fix points.

[0011] FIG. 3 is a block diagram of an example game machine.

[0012] FIG. 4 is a block diagram of an example game system.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0013] Persons of ordinary skill in the art will realize that the following description of the present invention is illustrative only and not in any way limiting. Other embodiments of the invention will readily suggest themselves to such skilled persons having the benefit of this disclosure.

[0014] Referring to the drawings, for illustrative purposes the present invention is shown embodied in FIGS. 1 and 2. It will be appreciated that the apparatus may vary as to configuration and as to details of the parts, and that the method may vary as to details, partitioning, and the order of the acts, without departing from the inventive concepts disclosed herein.

[0015] FIG. 1 shows a game device conceptually illustrating some of the novel aspects of the present disclosure. The game device has a cabinet 100 enclosing a video display 116 and a set of game play buttons shown generally as buttons 106 which may include a game selector button for toggling between available games and a denomination selector button for selecting the base wagering unit (e.g. a penny, nickel, quarter, fifty cent, dollar, etc.). Any input devices or player interface may be implemented, including but not limited to buttons, joy sticks, touch screens, etc. The game device also comprises the internal hardware and software needed for gaming devices, including at least one processor, dynamic memory, non-volatile memory, system support circuitry configured to allow an embedded operating system to run on the processor, and input/output (I/O) connections which include interfaces to the various player interfaces including play buttons 106 and video 116 output such as is shown in FIG. 1. Also included is an interface to an external network connection shown here as SMIB (slot machine interface board) 108 which interfaces to network 110. There may be Ethernet ports, wireless connections, or any other operable network connection allowing the gaming machine to be in operable communication with a server and/or floor controller as is shown in FIG. 4. Also included is the software needed to implement one of more games whose outcome is at least partially determined by a random event (poker, reel slots, bingo, keno, etc). The internals are not illustrated.

[0016] Again referring to FIG. 1, video display 116 shows an example display of a draw poker game having five cards in-hand, 104a through 104f. As may be appreciated, any game of chance may be displayed or implemented on the gaming device. The top of display 116 shows inset visual area 114 having game-related data thereon. This data may be, but is not limited to, paytables, denominations, game types, game variations, volume and any other data a player may see about a game; this specifically includes data that, previously, was only accessible by changing screens so that the entire visual field changed.

[0017] In an example embodiment, the locations of the display of the game (the cards 104a-f), the paytable, and denominations are located at visual fixed points (or areas) on display 116. A player can select a desired wager denomination using the denomination selector button. Once the denomination is selected, a player can toggle the game selector button and the available games on game machine 100 will be displayed in the visual fixed point where cards 104a-f are shown. For instance, if a player selects a one cent denomination, then the available games that may be selected

may be 5 card stud, blackjack, and Bally's Blazing Sevens. By toggling the game selector button, each of the games will be serially displayed along with the paytable associated with the particular game. The paytable also is located at a visual fixed point and each paytable will be located in the same area (location) of the display as the player toggles the game selector button. More or less games may be available depending upon the denomination selected and a player can choose another denomination, such as a quarter, and then toggle the game selector button to see the games and the associated paytables available for quarter wagers, such as for example, 5 card stud, blackjack, Bally's Blazing Sevens, Bally's Green Stamps.

[0018] Although the illustration of FIG. 1 shows a single display logically divided into separate viewing areas, any combination of screens may be used (i.e., one screen for the game play, another for the fixed-point visual displays, etc.).

[0019] As noted previously, the game itself may be any number of different games of chance, such as those with a set of physical reels, roulette, or poker. In the case of poker, player cards may be displayed on a table where the fixed-point display disclosed herein may be on a screen embedded in the table and in front of a player where they sit, etc. Alternatively, the visual fixed point display disclosed herein may be on a handheld device (personal PDA, casino-issued tablet, etc.) associated with the game being played through the use of a player tracking card, physical location of the player and the electronic device, etc. Additionally, the set of buttons 106 may include a field cloaking button which may cloak some fixed points, such as the paytable, and expand the size of the game to fill the entire space of display 116 or allow an additional game to be displayed, such as one or more additional hands of poker or possibly other playable games. In the example where one or more hands or games are playable, this can be simultaneously or serially, depending upon a player's preferences. Additionally, in the case of group games, such as poker, a player could play one or more hands at the same game or with different games. All such embodiments are fully contemplated herein.

[0020] Paytable 102 has paylines as part of the game-related data for the player; one payline is 112. Individual paylines are examples of data usable as visual fix points. In some games, a player may have the choice of playing different amounts per hand, pay a different amount of money for each game credit, play variations of a game that has slightly different paylines in a paytable, have game selections with different titles and different paytables with varying paylines, etc. Using the visual fixed point display methods disclosed herein, the maximum amount of data that can remain unchanged on display 116, and particularly in data area 114, is held visually constant or fixed. Only their specific differences are changed, in this example payline 112.

[0021] For instance, a player can select the denomination and number of credits wagered per line (for example, one, two or three credits) which depending upon the player selection may cause a light to highlight the payline column associated with the potential awards. Then the player can toggle the game selector button to see the available games for the selected denomination and the associated payline column highlighted in the same location as the player switches from game to game. Thus, a player can flip back

and forth between screens comparing this data with another game, making visual identification of the single changed payline in the context of the overall paytable significantly easier to discern and compare than previously possible. This allows a player to make their best choice of games to play based on information important to them in the easiest manner possible.

[0022] A further aid to differentiate fixed visual points from changed ones is to use a highlight color or other visual means to indicate the changed items. An example would be to hold as many elements on display 116 unchanged as possible (the visual fixed points of the present disclosure). In this case, cards 104 and other data in 114, including non-changing paylines, would remain unchanged. Changed payline 112 may be highlighted using a lighter, brighter, or more intense color than the rest of the paylines. Alternatively, the changed payline may be italicized or bolded. In one embodiment, all the displays outside of the payline area could be held constant, specifically including the player's current cards 104 (or reels if it is a reel game or other game indicia). The unchanging game indicia are visual fixed points, left unchanged for the benefit of the player.

[0023] The amount of visual changes will clearly depend on the selections the player wants to show and compare before changing games (this includes any changes, from large changes such as poker to bingo, to small changes such as a few payline differences corresponding to a single poker game variant).

[0024] Referring now to FIG. 2 and starting at box 200, a player begins play at a game device having visual fixed points for game selection displays. Moving to diamond 202, the decision is playing the current game selection or not. If the player wishes to play with the current selection, then the "Yes" exit is taken to box 204. The actions corresponding to box 204 are any associated with playing the current game until the game is at a selectable point of play. As soon as the game is at a selectable point of play, the process continues from box 204 to diamond 202. The player then decides if he/she wants to continue play with the current game state or make a change. In the event that the player makes no change, then the process returns to box 204. Note that in most cases, the 202-204-202-204 repeating loop will appear as a player simply continuing with game play at the end of each play cycle; no action is required of the player other than to simply continue playing the current game. The game may or may not have indicators on the display when certain game change options may be invoked.

[0025] One alternative embodiment is to have a panel in a designated area of the display that visually indicates when certain changeable options may be revised. An example would be to change enabled touch screen buttons from red to green when they can be selected by a player. The indicia would return to red as soon as the player takes an action which negates the option until the next selection point. Another example, may be for an indicator to flash its light when an election may be made.

[0026] It is expected that certain change options will be available at different times during game play, and other options may be controlled by a back-end system (server) over the network. For example, certain low-denomination selections may be disabled by the server during times of high traffic at a casino. The casino does not want some players

using the \$0.01 denomination option when there are other players waiting to play games; the casino may only enable \$0.25 to \$5.00 denominations during high traffic time.

[0027] Alternatively, game selections and any other changeable states can vary depending on the time and traffic conditions at a casino. All such variations are fully contemplated herein. If, in diamond **202**, the player decides they want to make a game state change the “No” exit is taken to box **206**. The actions corresponding to this box are those associated with a player selecting which change (from any that are currently enabled) they wish to see. Once one or more elections are made, the process continues from box **206** to box **208**.

[0028] The actions corresponding to box **208** are those associated with displaying the game data changes associated with the selection the player just made. The sub-process of box **208** is shown by dotted-line loop **212-214** is shown. The process associated with these boxes will have been programmed into the gaming logic being executed with the gaming machine during use by a player (i.e. not made on the fly). The player will simply see the results flowing from the described process.

[0029] The actions corresponding to box **212** include the identification of the visually important or distinct game data indicia shown on screen. In a poker game, this would include the player’s current hand (current cards, no matter if face up or face down), the payable with paylines, and other game data indicia such as any additional bonuses currently active, special game features for this game variant, etc. A bingo game would be similar, except the visually important game data would include the player’s current bingo card(s) instead of a poker hand. Similarly for a reel game, the current state of the reels (what is currently on the screen) would be visually important data. Backgrounds are also visual fix points, and will be used differently depending on what the player selects to see.

[0030] As an example, visual fix points may be defined and divided into classes as follows: (i) backgrounds, including but not limited to background colors, patterns, themes, display area layout, etc.; (ii) game displays, which includes the game display on which game play is shown or acts such as poker hand(s), bingo card(s), keno, reels, etc.; (iii) game information, including but not limited to paytables with paylines, features, added or selected special features (such as purchasing a better payable for a given game), etc.

[0031] Thus, the processes associated with box **212** are to identify the various visual fix points on a game screen. Continuing into box **214**, the processes include selecting a subset of the already identified fix points. The selected subset will be a visual point or points that will be changed in accordance with a selection or selections made by the player. The rest of the visual points will remain as fixed points.

[0032] As an example, assume the player is currently playing a draw poker game with a medium payback payable, set in the low 90% for average play. At the end of a hand (after the player has selected which cards to hold, the cards have been replaced, and the final hand value determined), the player decides to make a change. At this point, the player could either change the game altogether (switch to a reel game), or could up their wager amounts and get a better payable as a result.

[0033] In one embodiment, there may be icons or change indicia that change color at the end of game play to indicate to a player that a change election may be made at this time (a change point). The icons may be buttons on a deck, touch screen icons, or any other input means. If the player elects to change the wager amount and therefore the payable, then the subset selected from the visual fix points that will show the selected changes will be the field of individual paylines, plus any icon that shows a game name change (if that occurs), wager change, or similar informational item. All the other visual points remains as fixed points, including the background, game displays, and any other game information that will not change (remains a visual fix point).

[0034] Having determined the fixed visual points and the subset to be changed, a changed display is shown to the user. The visual fix points will be represented as closely as possible to the previous corresponding fix points. Notice that in some circumstances they will be identical, while in others they will be as visually close as possible given related restraints on the screen size, nature of the visual points to be changed, etc. For example, if the new game information to be displayed includes a new payable, then the new payable must be added where it logically needs to go. The visual fix points will be altered as little as possible; in this case, the rest of the paylines must be shifted up or down to enable placement of the new payable. Otherwise no changes would be made. Keeping the visual fixed points as representationally close as possible between the previous display and the next display is what makes the changes easy to visually digest and compare between selections. It is not necessary that the two displays be visually identical; there will be variations on the exact placement of the visual fix points based on the selected change the player wants to see. But, it is important to keep the visual fix points as unchanged as possible as to both placement on the screen and as compared to itself as a discrete unit.

[0035] Upon completion of the processes of Box **214**, the process returns to box **208**, where a changed display is shown to a player having the characteristics that corresponding visual fix points appear closely, if not identically, to the location of the corresponding visual fix points of the prior screen display, and any changed visual points will be displayed where they logically fit (e.g., new paylines will be shown in their appropriate place in a payable which is displayed in the same field or nearly so depending upon the size of the data compared to the payable data displayed on the prior screen display). After displaying the player indicated selection using visual fix points as disclosed herein, the process continues from box **208** to diamond **210**.

[0036] The decision corresponding to diamond **210** is the selection to show another game alternative or to play using the currently selected game. If the answer is to show another selection, the “yes” exit is taken to box **208**, re-entering the above-described loop. If the answer is ‘no’, then the “No” exit is taken to box **204**, where the player plays the currently selected game. Not shown is that the player can stop using the gaming machine anytime he/she wishes, typically at diamond **202** or **210**.

[0037] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, FIG. 3 is a block diagram showing the interconnection of physical and logical components **300** of game machine **100** (as in FIG. 1), such as is conventionally

available as for example Bally slot machine with reel type games, video games, or combinations thereof. Currency acceptor **310** is typically connected to central processing unit (“CPU”) **305** by a serial connection such as RS-232 or USB. CPU **305** executes game program **220** that causes video display screen **330** to display a game that includes a plurality of simulated indicia-bearing reels **370**. In one embodiment, game program **320** includes programming enabling the implementation of the steps described in FIG. 2.

[0038] 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 **310**, a signal is sent to CPU **305** which, in turn, assigns an appropriate number of credits for play. The player may further control the operation of gaming machine **300**, for example, to select the number of pay lines to play and the amount to wager via electromechanical or touch screen buttons **350** and initiates the process described above and establishing the initial visual fix points for display in pre-determined fields located on display **230**, where display **320** may be any display connected or connectable with gaming machine **300**. The game starts in response to the player pulling a lever or pushing one of buttons **350**, the detection of which causes CPU **305** to spin reels **370** displayed on video display screen **330**. Random number generator **340** responds to instructions from CPU **305** to provide a randomly selected stop position for each reel. CPU **300** then stops the reels according to the predetermined stop positions to display a plurality of reel indicia on video display screen **330**. The set of possible outcomes includes a subset of outcomes with a set of corresponding pre-determined awards depending upon the value of the outcome. Depending upon the outcomes, bonus rounds may be enabled and other bonus awards may be attainable depending upon outcomes or pre-determined events. In various embodiments of gaming machine **300**, game program **320** 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 as with a networked system as shown in FIG. 4. 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 the gaming machine **300** are stored in the same or a separate memory device (not shown).

[0039] Predetermined payout amounts for certain combinations of reel indicia and bonus game outcomes are stored as part of game program **320**. Such payout amounts are, in response to instructions from CPU of game machine **300**, provided to the player in the form of coins, credits or currency via payout mechanism **360**, 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.

[0040] Referring to FIG. 4, in accordance with one embodiment, gaming system **400** includes server **410**, gaming machines **450**, and network **440** connecting gaming machines **450** to server **410**, such as is conventionally available as for example the Bally CMS and SMS game systems connected to networked gaming machines, such as for example Bally’s conventionally available slot machines including reel and/or video games. Additionally, gaming display computer **430** is shown connected to network **440**. Server **410** may be selected from a variety of conventionally available servers including conventionally available player tracking, accounting, bonus, and progressive bonus servers. The type of server used is generally determined by the platform and software requirements of the gaming system. Examples of conventionally used hardware and/or software 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 **410** may be configured as a single “logical” server that comprises multiple physical servers. Gaming machines **450** operate similar to conventional peripheral networked terminals. Gaming machines **450** have a player interface such as a display, a card reader, and selection buttons through which gaming machines **450** interact with a player playing a collection and redemption wagering game. The player interface is used for making choices such as the amount of a bet or the number of lines to bet. The displays and player interfaces may be implemented with visual fix point apparatus and software as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. With networked gaming machines **450**, visual fix point apparatus and software can be utilized to receive information and instructions from a network server, such as to limit the selections of game type or wager available to the player during particular times. Also, in the event that the visual fix points are player selectable as to type of data displayed over selected fields, then the player preferences can be saved on the player tracking server or server maintaining player information and preferences so that a player may move from machine to machine and once he/she has entered identification information on a selected gaming machine, the player may view the visual fix points with the same subject content in the same orientation as the player prefers. For example, a player may wish to have the game type displayed on the upper most field/s (or line/s) of display **102** followed by the amount to be wagered followed by additional data oriented to the player’s preference, such that each time a player selects any gaming machine that is networked to the player preference server containing the player preferences, the player will view the visual fix points in the fields and orientation that the player prefers and is familiar with. Gaming machines **450** also provide information to server **410** concerning activity on gaming machines **450** and provide a communication portal for players with server **410**. 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.

[0041] In various embodiments, any of the game machines **450** may include a mechanical reel, wheel, sphere, or other polygonal-structured spinning slot games (which would limit the flexibility of selecting different types of games with respect to the visual fixed point for the mechanical compo-

nents), video slot game, video poker game, keno game, video blackjack game, or a game machine offering one or more of the above described base games plus being networked to participate in progressive bonuses or network provided bonuses. Networking components (not shown) facilitate communications between the system server **410** and game management units **420** and/or gaming display control computers **430** that control displays for carousels of gaming machines across network **440**. Game management units (GMU's) **420** 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 game using a display **425** operatively connected to the GMU **420**. Displays related to games being played on gaming machines **450** or GMU displays **425** may also be presented on game display **435** by game display control computer **430**. In one embodiment, the GMU **420** is a separate component located outside the gaming machine. Alternatively, in another embodiment, the GMU **420** is located within the gaming machine. Optionally, in an alternative embodiment, one or more gaming machines **450** connect directly to the network and are not connected to a GMU **420**.

[0042] A game system of the type described above also allows a plurality of games to be linked under the control of server **410** for cooperative or competitive play in a particular area, carousel, casino or between casinos located in geographically separate areas. One such system-based embodiment includes games in which a common system-based feature is driven by the results of a plurality of games played on gaming machines **450**. For instance, by example, as games are played on various gaming machines **450**, apart from the individual awards (which may be cash, cash coupons, credit to the player's account or gaming machine, gift coupons, prizes, or redeemable indicia) that a player may receive, each player's game play also may contribute to a common system-based bonus fund for which the player may be eligible to win when pre-determined criteria are met.

[0043] Another embodiment includes a progressive system which has prizes that may be won by the first player to meet a pre-determined or defined criterion or criteria, such as achieving a pre-determined winnings threshold which could be tracked as one of the visual fix points so that a player could see as the winnings increase and possibly could see the player's ranking amongst other players game play. Player bonus pools may be funded by a portion of the wagers on each of the participating gaming machines or from other sources such as, but not limited to, promotional monies allocated by a casino or game establishment or entity.

[0044] As previously discussed player preferences may be stored on a network (alternatively, a smart card player identification card may retain player preference information), such that a player may later resume play of a selected game machine **450** at the preserved game state. Various embodiments may include inserting an identifying player card, entering an identification sequence on the player interface, and/or inserting a voucher or other medium that identifies the particular saved game state preferences. One such means is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,923,721, entitled "Apparatus and Method for Maintaining Game State,"

which is hereby incorporated by reference, but any means may be used provided the player is able to resume play and retain the same or similar game state with respect to the visual fix points disclosed herein from one playing session to the next. It may be appreciated that all of the same options may not be available on each gaming machines, such as choice of game, game environment, wager amount, lines to be wagered upon, etc. In such an embodiment, a message may be driven by the software such as software having the flow of FIG. 2, indicating that a specified option is not available and to choose an available option.

[0045] 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 collection and redemption 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 **450** operates the respective gaming and video displays in conjunction with the game whose play is controlled by the remote computer. It may further be appreciated that various wireless displays are available including operator-provided tablets where a player may have the visual fix points displayed and may make selections that are communicated to gaming machine **450**. Additional wireless devices may be useable including personal data assistants and cellular phones depending upon the ability of the network to integrate the external device for communicating with either the system and then through the system to the game or for communicating directly with the game as through an infrared port or similar receiver/transmitter structure and software.

[0046] With respect to the example flow diagram, it may be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art having the benefit of the present disclosure as steps which can vary as to order, content, allocation of resources between steps, times repeated, and similar variations while staying fully within the inventive concepts disclosed herein.

[0047] Although the description above contains certain specificity, the described embodiments should not be construed as indicating the scope claimed; the descriptions given are an illustration of embodiments. For instance, it may be appreciated that a visual fixed point may be a reference area visually identified or associated by a player with a particular type of game data, such as the game indicia or payable. It is within the scope of the meaning visual fixed points to mean points or areas of a player's visual fixation. It also may be appreciated that different games may have associated game data located in different display areas from other games, so that some of the common points of visual fixation may be limited to a particular game and its selectable options. Also, it may be appreciated that the subfields for respective of the related game data including the player interface buttons may shift within a region of the display or displays depending upon the game selected. For instance, a video poker game interface buttons may have differences with similar interface buttons for a video reel game, or for a reel game the indicia display may make it more preferable to locate an associated payable on a separate display.

What is claimed is:

1. A visual fixed point apparatus for use with a gaming machine including a display field with pre-determined display areas for displaying game-related data, and a player interface for selecting one or more selectable game options associable with selected of the game-related data and causing associated of the game-related data to display in the pre-determined display areas.

2. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 1, the player interface including a denomination selector for selecting a currency denomination to wager from a set of currency denominations.

3. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 2, the player interface including a game selector for selecting a game to play from a set of games associated with a selected currency denomination, each of the set of games being displayable in one of the pre-determined display areas.

4. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 3, a second of the predetermined display areas for simultaneously displaying a paytable associated with any selected game of the set of games.

5. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 4, the player interface including a wager selector for selecting the quantity to be wagered from a set of selectable wagers on an event in a selected of the games;

the paytable including a highlightable region associated with the quantity to be wagered.

6. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 1, the player interface including a game selector for selecting a game to play from a set of games.

7. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 1, the player interface having a cloaking interface for removing a selected portion of the display field from view, the cloaking interface causing a game portion of the display to enlarge.

8. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 1, the display field having one or more subfields for display of selected data, the subfields may be oriented by player preference.

9. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 8, the player preference being retainable on a storage media associated with player identification information, the player preference being recallable at a later time by entry of the player identification information.

10. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 9, the storage media may be a player transportable card or device that may be recognizable or attachable to a gaming machine for download and/or upload of player data.

11. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 8, each of the subfields having an associated set of game-related data, the elements of the associated set of game-related data being serially displayable within a respective subfield.

12. A visual fixed point apparatus as in claim 8, the subfields including tags for accessing additional information and causing the additional information to be viewable by the player.

13. A method for using visual fixed points including the steps of:

- displaying game-related data in pre-determined areas;
- selecting one or more selectable game options associable with selected of the game-related data; and,
- modifying the displayed game-related data depending upon the selecting step.

14. The method of claim 13, the selecting step including: selecting a currency denomination to wager from a set of currency denominations.

15. The method of claim 14, the selecting step including: selecting a game to play from a set of games associated with a selected currency denomination, each of the set of games being serially displayable in one of the pre-determined areas.

16. The method of claim 13, the selecting step including: simultaneously displaying a paytable associated with each selected game of the set of games in another of the pre-determined areas.

17. The method of claim 13, the selecting step including: selecting the quantity to be wagered from a set of selectable wagers on an event in a selected of the games; highlighting a region of the paytable associated with the quantity to be wagered.

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