(54) Title: VIDEO GAME TERMINAL WITH OPERATOR PROGRAMMED GAMES WITH SERIES OF ROUNDS

(57) Abstract:
A video game terminal includes a series of options and programming capabilities for modifying the operation of the terminal with respect to combination games. Each combination game includes at least first and second game segments, and different options for playing of the combination games. One option allows the player a partial Credit Back after completion of the first game, second segment. In this way, the player can decide to save the Credit Back, rather than continue if the results after the first segment are poor. Another option is directed to the order of play of the different game segments being selected by the player. A further option is the ability for the operator to define a new combination game by selecting different combinations of the game segments.
ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A video game terminal includes a series of options and programming capabilities for modifying the operation of the terminal with respect to combination games. Each combination game includes at least first and second game segments, and different options for playing of the combination games. One option allows the player a partial Credit Back after completion of the first game, second segment. In this way, the player can decide to save the Credit Back, rather than continue if the results after the first segment are poor. Another option is directed to the order of play of the different game segments being selected by the player. A further option is the ability for the operator to define a new combination game by selecting different combinations of the game segments.
TITLE: VIDEO GAME TERMINAL WITH OPERATOR PROGRAMMED GAMES WITH SERIES OF ROUNDS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION
The present invention relates to video game terminals, and in particular, to video game terminals that include combination games having a series of two or more game segments. In a preferred aspect of the invention, these combination games include a number of operator programmable features that alter the play of the combination games.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION
Pay-to-play video game terminals are known which have a host of games divided into different categories where a player selects a category and chooses an appropriate game for play. These game terminals are used in a host of different environments and the games often include operator set parameters such as price, difficulty, and sometimes time of play. These operator adjusted features allow the operator to customize the game terminal for the particular environment and patrons. Another operator adjusted feature is the ability to enable or disable certain games.

More recently, some game terminals have included a set series of combination games where each combination game comprises a first game segment of a particular game followed by at least a second game segment of a different game. The scores for these different segments are combined and a total combination game score is then produced. Typically, these video game terminals include games having three game segments playable in a fixed order. Games of this type are popular and often support a higher price point. In addition to the enjoyment of playing the multiple game segments, there is incentive to
compete with others by beating the previous high scores. These high scores are typically associated with the particular combination game and a successful player can add his score and name if the score meets a high value criteria.

The game terminal manufacturers attempt to preprogram combination games to appeal to different clientele. In many cases, due to the particular market or purchasers, a different set of combination games may be more profitable and therefore a larger number of fixed combination games are included in the programming.

The present invention seeks to define a video game terminal which addresses a number of these issues and allows an operator to modify the operation of combination games available to a player.

20 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A video game terminal according to the present invention comprises a plurality of single games for selected game play by a player,

a plurality of combination games for selected game play by a player where each combination game includes a first game segment and at least one further game segment to define a combination game of said plurality of game segments. Each combination game includes an arrangement for combining the score of each game segment of the combination game to define a final score of the combination game. The terminal includes a plurality of factory set combination games and a capability to define and present a plurality of operator set combination games. Each operator set combination game is defined by a specific combination of the game segments selected by the operator during an operator programming combination game setup mode.
According to an aspect of the invention, at least some of said game segments are each of a reduced version of one of said single games.

In yet a different aspect of the invention, each game segment includes a score coefficient for standardizing the score of the game segment whereby the final score of a combination game is defined by adding said standardized scores of said game segments of the combination game.

In an aspect of the invention, at least some of said combination games provide as part of the play of the combination game, player selection of the respective game segment to be played first.

In a preferred aspect of the invention, at least some of said combination games include a player option to receive a partial credit of a game cost of said combination game by terminating said combination game prior to completion thereof.

In a further aspect of the invention, the player option to receive a partial credit is available to a player between completion of one game segment and prior to initiation of a following game segment.

In an aspect of the invention, at least some of said combination games each include 3 game segments and said partial credit is available to a player prior to initiation of a second game segment of the respective combination game.

According to an aspect of the invention, at least some of said combination games each include three or more game segments and a player option for selecting the order of play of said game segments.
In an aspect of the invention the player option to receive a partial credit is controlled by an operator option available during an operator setup screen where the operator determines whether this player option is activated and available to a player during play of one of said combination games or is not activated.

In a preferred aspect of the invention, the player option to receive a partial credit is operator set for each combination game.

A video game terminal according to the present invention comprises a plurality of single games for selected game play by a player, a plurality of combination games where each combination game includes a first game segment combined with at least one further game segment and includes an arrangement for combining the score of each game segment of a combination game to define a final score of the combination game. In addition, at least some of said combination games include a player option to receive a partial credit of a game cost of said combination game by terminating play of said combination game prior to completion thereof.

In an aspect of the invention, the player option to receive a partial credit is available to a player between completion of one game segment and prior to initiation of a following game segment.

In a further aspect of the invention, at least some of said combination games include 3 game segments.

In a preferred aspect of the invention, the player option to receive a partial credit is available after completion of a first game segment and prior to
initiation of a second game segment of said 3 game segments.

In a different aspect of the invention, the terminal includes a plurality of factory set combination games and a capability to define and present a plurality of operator set combination games, and wherein each operator set combination game is defined by a combination of said game segments selected by the operator during an operator programming combination game setup mode.

In an aspect of the video game terminal, each game segment is a reduced version of one of said single games.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Preferred embodiments of the invention are shown in the drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is an illustration of an initial screen of a video game terminal;

Figure 2 is a depiction of the game terminal screen when a combination game category is initiated;

Figure 3 is a depiction of the screen of the game terminal showing details of a combination game entitled iTouch Exclusive;

Figure 4 is a game screen showing details of a particular combination game entitled Memories of Taipei;

Figure 5 is a depiction of the game screen showing details of the combination game iTouch Exclusive requesting the player to select a particular game segment for round 1 of the combination game;

Figure 6 shows a game screen where the player has the option to terminate the combination game prior to completion thereof and receive a partial credit;

Figure 7 is a set up screen used by the operator to program the game terminal;
Figure 8 is a game screen showing details of programmed combination games;
Figure 9 is an operator game screen showing pricing of particular games;
5 Figure 10 shows the game screen where an additional game screen where an additional game is to be added by the operator to the combination game;
Figure 11 is the game screen where the operator can define a new name for a combination game;
10 Figure 12 shows the Triathlon Bing-Bong and the combination game score calculation; and
Figure 13 shows a Triathlon game where Round 1 has been completed and Round 2 is yet to be selected by the player.
15

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The depiction of the touch screen 20 shown in Figure 1 is an initial screen that a player is presented in selecting a particular game to be played. The screen 20 includes a listing in area 26, of the number of paid player credits available and the screen includes a category column 22 which is a list of the various game categories to assist a player in selecting a game. Each of these categories has a series of games associated therewith. In Figure 1, the category 24, Triathlon, has been selected and the player is taken to touch screen 36 shown in Figure 2.

30 In Figure 2, the category column 22 remains available to the player and as the Triathlon category 24 has been actuated, a partial list in the category Triathlon is provided in column 38. Additional games in the category can be actuated by pressing the more games indicated as 40. In the Triathlon category, all games are combination games made up of three game segments. Each game segment is preferably related to a single game available in other categories. These game segments are
shorter versions of the corresponding single game. Each
game segment includes a score coefficient used to adjust
the particular game segment's final score for adding with
final scores of other game segments of the combination
game to determine a final combination game score. (See
Fig. 12). The screen 200 of Figure 12 shows a Final
Score calculation for the completed Triathlon game Bing-
Bong. Basically, the game segment coefficient
standardizes of the scores. This allows different game
segments to be specified for particular combination games
and the Final Scores calculated with appropriate weight
to each game segment.

The game terminal comes with a series of factory
set combination games defined in the Triathlon category.
The various combination games have fixed preprogrammed
game segments. The video game terminal also includes the
ability for the operator to program operator Triathlon
games to meet the needs of a particular environment.

As noted in Figure 2, the general category of
Triathlon games has been selected and a series of
preprogrammed Triathlons are available in column 38 for
selection by the player, or the player may actuate the
"More Games" button 40 and review additional programmed
Triathlon games.

Figure 3 shows the details of the Triathlon game
entitled iTouch Exclusive. These details are obtained by
pressing the iTouch Exclusive button 42 of Figure 2. The
touch screen 50 of the Figure 3 includes details of the
three game segments of the Triathlon, namely Monster
Mash, Bonbon Factory, and Gone Fishing. In addition, the
screen 50 includes details of the highest score
previously obtained for this Triathlon, that being by
Tanya, with the scores achieved shown to the right of her
name. Note that the high scores are broken into the
three segments according to the games shown therebelow,
and this provides the player with an indication how he may fare in attempting to beat the high score of Tanya. The touch screen 50 also includes the option for the player to select a particular game segment for round 1. Pressing any of the actuation buttons 51 through 53 will select one of the particular game segments for round 1. Thus the player is able to select which game segment he wishes to initially play as part of his three game segment Triathlon.

Pressing any of the actuating buttons 51 through 53 will take the player to the particular game segment for play. The player will then return after completion of the first game segment to screen 212 of Figure 13 where the one game segment which has been completed will be shown in a different colour or identified as Finished with the appropriate score and round 2 buttons will be shown rather than round 1 buttons associated with the remaining game segments. It is not possible to reselect the first game segment.

It is possible, after playing the first round, and perhaps after playing the second round, that the certain credits may be available to the player if he wishes to terminate the Triathlon without completing the subsequent rounds. In many cases, this option will only be available after round 1 and prior to commencement of round 2. The player will be presented with a screen similar to Figure 5, as previously described with the two game segments available for round 2 shown, as well as the game already completed, shown in a different colour. By pressing the “X” actuator 55, the player will be taken to a screen, or be able to actuate a pop-up window 60 as shown in Figure 6. This pop-up window provides information to the player regarding any benefits of quitting at this time. In the example shown, the Triathlon iTouch Exclusive, may have cost two credits, however, if the player actuates the “Yes” actuator 62 in
Figure 6, after round one, and before commencing round two, he will receive a refund of one credit.

In this way, if a player does not have a satisfactory round one, he can choose to continue the game for rounds two and three, or he may choose to quit the game and save one credit. This feature is beneficial if the player is seeking to beat the highest score. The ability to quit and receive a partial credit with respect to a particular Triathlon game is preferably a programmable option controlled by the operator and will be discussed in later Figures.

In the touch screen 90 of Figure 4, details of the Triathlon entitled Memories of Taipei are displayed. The player is presented with a screen where round one requires playing of the game segment "What's the Difference"; round two requires playing of the game "Fortune Taipei"; and round three is with respect to the game segment "At A Glance". The cost of the game of two credits is shown. In this particular game, the ability for the player to select the game segment for rounds one, two or three, is not be available. The game can be commenced by pressing the round one indicator as 92 in Figure 4.

In Figure 7, an operator set up screen 70 is shown. This screen is not available to the player. As can be seen, there are a number of general categories with particular explanations provided regarding the Tournament/Triathlon category 72 used to customize the Triathlon category, and define new operator Triathlon games. Actuation of the active area 72 of Figure 7, takes the operator to the Triathlon category of Figure 8. Each of the various Triathlon games is shown.

Preferably, there are twelve standard Triathlon games with five initially shown on the screen of Figure
8, and more of the predefined games being available by use of the slide box at the right hand side of the screen. The Triathlon category can be restricted to the twelve standard games or the twelve standard games in combination with additional operator defined games. If the operator wishes to define a new Triathlon game, he presses the actuating area 102 to take the operator to the screen such as 110, shown in Figure 9. In this case, two game segments Pyramid Runs and Racing Elevens, have already been defined as part of the operator set Triathlon. A further empty slot 112 has not yet been defined. The price of two credits has been indicated for this new Triathlon, and the ability for the player to choose the order of the game segments has been turned “off”. Similarly, partial credit after completing round one has also been turned off as indicated by the “0”. Pressing the empty slot 112 produces a pop-up window 112.

At the top of pop-up window 112 there is a window showing the category cards, however, by pressing the arrow actuator 122, any of the other categories can be selected. The window 120 includes the empty slot at the top and the two previously selected games Pyramid Runs and Racing Elevens. A series of card games is available for selection below Racing Elevens. In one case, Suits and Pairs is the first game segment, however, the slide bar 124 may be adjusted such that other card game segments are shown. Selecting any of the particular card game segments will place it into the empty category 126, and this will ultimately be displayed in item 112 of Figure 9, once the OK button has been actuated. If desired, either of the game Pyramid Runs or Racing Elevens, can be changed to a different game segment, merely by touching the slot, and moving within the category or other selected category to replace the game segment. Once a sequence of three game segments has been determined, the operator presses the OK button and is taken to screen 130 of Figure 11 where the particular
combination game is named. The name is confirmed by pressing the Exit button and this particular combination game entitled Test Triathlon, will then be available under the Triathlon category.

In this way, the operator can set the cost for the particular game that being any of the preset Triathlon games or any of the operator programmed Triathlon games. Each of these games can also be varied by the operator changing the settings such that the Credit Back option is available after round one, and/or the order of playing the games, i.e., the ability for the player to select which game he chooses to play for round one, can be activated by the operator.

The Credit Back option as described herein provides additional strategy to be considered by the player. In particular, if the Credit Back option is available and the player is attempting to beat the high score, and the ability to select the particular game for round one is available to him, he can either choose to play his worst game first, or perhaps he will decide to play his best game in an attempt to beat the previously reported high score. For example, a player who is very confident in his ability to do well in two of the three game segments may choose to choose his worst game segment for round one. In this way, the player can use the Credit Back feature to play his worst game segment until he achieves a reasonable score. At that point, he can then complete the Triathlon with the remaining two game segments where he is likely to score better results. In the case of a less skilled player, it may be desirable to select the best game segment for round one, and only continue with the Triathlon if a reasonable score has been achieved. In any event, the player can consider in deciding whether the Triathlon game should be completed after round one or whether the Credit Back option should be exercised.
As indicated in the operator set-up screen, the Credit Back feature can also be activated when the ability to select the order is not available. In this programming combination, the player is forced to play the game segments in a particular order but can quit early, to receive the credit back if the performance in the first round is poor. Typically, the Credit Back is only 50% of the cost of the Triathlon game. For example, if the Triathlon costs two credits, the player effectively salvages one credit whereas the operator has received one credit for playing only one third of the Triathlon game. In this way, there may be additional revenue generated by the video game terminal. In the case of the player, there is the ability to cut his losses partially through the game.

It is also possible to define Triathlon games where more than three game segments are available to be selected by a player but the combination game requires the selection and completion of only three game segments. For example, a Triathlon could be defined where four game segments are available for selection, and the player selects from the four game segments, the three game segments he wishes to complete. Therefore, although the Triathlon games have been described with respect to either a pre-set three game segments for various Triathlon games, which are set in the initial programming, as well as a series of operator programmable three segment games, other combination games can be defined either at the factory or by the operator where the player selects three game segments to be played from four or more game segments. In this way, additional strategy is involved and additional player appeal is realized as the likelihood of the player being skilled in the required three game segments is higher as he is able to select his best three game segments from four or more game segments. In this way, the player is involved in
defining the combination game. In most cases, the number of games available for selection for a particular combination game is less than six.

The combination game has been described with respect to a combination game requiring three game segments. It is also possible to use these features with respect to two game segments, four game segments, five combination games, etc. Also, the ability to have additional games available for selection for a particular number of rounds can be used with any of these different number of game segments required for a particular game.

The video game terminal includes a series of game segments and factors for standardizing the scores of game segments to reflect a degree of performance. This allows game segment scores to be combined for a combination game score. Preferably, any game segments can be combined by an operator or player with any other game segment or game segments to define a combination game. These game segments are typically used in preset combination games as well as operator set combination games.

Although various preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described herein in detail, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that variations may be made thereto without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the appended claims.
THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A video game terminal comprising
   a plurality of single games for selected game play by a player,
   a plurality of game segments where each game segment is combined with at least one further game segment to define a combination game and each combination game includes an arrangement for combining the score of each game segment of a combination game to define a final score of the combination game,
   said terminal including a plurality of factory set combination games and a capability to define and present a plurality of operator set combination games, and wherein
   each operator set combination game is defined by a combination of said game segments selected by the operator during an operator programming combination game setup mode.

2. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least some of said game segments are each a reduced version of one of said single games.

3. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 1 wherein each game segment includes a score coefficient for standardizing the score of the game segment whereby the final score of a combination game is defined by adding said standardized scores of said game segments.

4. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least some of said combination games provide as part of the play of the combination game player selection of the respective game segment to be played first.
5. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least some of said combination games include a player option to receive a partial credit of a game cost of said combination game by terminating said combination game prior to completion thereof.

6. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 5 wherein said player option to receive a partial credit is available to a player between completion of one game segment and prior to initiation of a following game segment.

7. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 6 wherein at least some of said combination games each include 3 game segments.

8. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 7 wherein said partial credit is available to a player prior to initiation of a second game segment of the respective combination game.

9. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least some of said combination games each include three or more game segments and a player option for selecting the order of play of said game segments.

10. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 9 wherein at least some of said combination games include a player option to receive a partial credit of a game cost of said combination game by terminating said combination game prior to completion thereof.

11. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 10 wherein said player option to receive a partial credit is controlled by an operator option available during an operator setup screen where the operator determines whether this player option is activated and available to a player during play of one of said combination games.
12. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 11 wherein said player option to receive a partial credit is operator set for each combination game.

13. A video game terminal comprising
   a plurality of single games for selected game play by a player,
   a plurality of combination games where each combination game includes a first game segment combined with at least one further game segment and includes an arrangement for combining the score of each game segment of a combination game to define a final score of the combination game, and
   wherein at least some of said combination games include a player option to receive a partial credit of a game cost of said combination game by terminating play of said combination game prior to completion thereof.

14. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 13 wherein said player option to receive a partial credit is available to a player between completion of one game segment and prior to initiation of a following game segment.

15. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 14 wherein at least some of said combination games include 3 game segments.

16. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 15 wherein said player option to receive a partial credit is available after completion of a first game segment and prior to initiation of a second game segment of said 3 game segments.

17. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 13 wherein said terminal includes a plurality of factory set combination games and a capability to define and present
a plurality of operator set combination games, and wherein each operator set combination game is defined by a combination of said game segments selected by the operator during an operator programming combination game setup mode.

18. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 17 wherein each game segment is a reduced version of one of said single games.

19. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 13 wherein each game segment is a reduced version of one of said single games.

20. A video game terminal as claimed in claim 13 wherein at least some of said combination games require a player to select the game segments to be played from a larger number of game segments available for player selection in determining what game segments will be played for determining a score for the combination game.
Application number/numéro de demande: 2483728

Figures: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Pages: ________________________________

[Signature]

Unscannable items
received with this application
(Request original documents in File Prep. Section on the 10th Floor)

Documents reçus avec cette demande ne pouvant être balayés
(Commander les documents originaux dans la section de préparation des dossiers au 10ième étage)