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(54) **Method and system for indicating a jackpot payout expectancy for a game**

(57) A method and system for indicating a jackpot payout expectancy for a game is provided for use with live or online gaming. The system includes a display of jackpot payout information for gaming participants that may allow participants to rapidly assess a status of various jackpot casino games to determine which game to

play, based on a likelihood of an imminent jackpot payout. For instance, a payout statistic (i.e., a jackpot thermometer) is provided to players to indicate how far a jackpot cycle of a game has run since the jackpot was last paid out. The statistic can be displayed graphically as a slider bar or as a thermometer icon, for example.

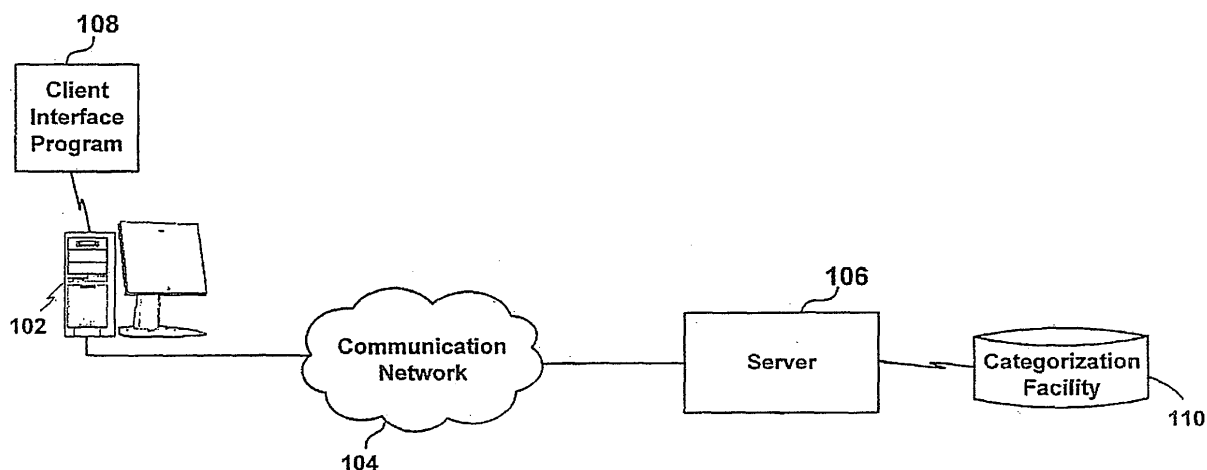


FIGURE 1

Description

[0001] The present disclosure relates to graphic displays for live or online gaming, and more particularly, to a presentation of jackpot payout game information to players participating in live or online casinos, poker rooms, and the like.

[0002] A live casino refers to a typical brick-and-mortar casino that includes various games providing gambling opportunities to visitors. A difficult task of a live casino is to enable visitors to rapidly select a particular game to play. Game selection can become burdensome as the number of games offered for play increase.

[0003] An online casino refers to a virtual casino where participants can join in various games over the Internet. Similar to a live casino, a difficult task of an online casino is also to enable players to rapidly select a particular game to play from a menu of games that are offered by the online casino. Game selection can become burdensome as the number of games offered for play increase. For example, it is not uncommon for online casinos to offer players a choice of 250 or more different games from which to select a desired game to play.

[0004] Many of the games available for play at live or online casinos are games that include jackpot payouts. A jackpot payout may refer to accumulated stakes pertaining to one game at an online casino, or other types of cumulatively pooled winnings possibly from multiple games at an online casino. The jackpot payout may also be the top prize or reward for winning a particular game or portion of a game at an online casino. A player may generally desire to play a game that has a high jackpot payout compared to others. In addition, a player would optimally like to select a game that has an increased chance of giving an imminent payout. However, it may be difficult for a player to determine such payouts or chances of winning from game selection menus at live or online casinos.

[0005] As an example, game selection usually occurs at a lobby or menu page of an online casino website. Games may be classified into categories and then presented to online participants. When a player selects a particular game category, a list (scrollable or paged) of all the games offered in that category can be displayed. When the player brings any game in the selected category into focus (for example, by allowing his mouse to hover over a game icon corresponding to that game), game data relating to the highlighted game may be displayed. However, without fully selecting the game, the amount of game data visible to the player may be limited. In addition, jackpot data may not be present for some or all of the games. Thus, it would be desirable for a player to be able to view game data pertaining to jackpot games including information that would enable a player make a quick decision regarding which jackpot game to play.

[0006] Disclosed herein are embodiments of a menu system that include a display of jackpot payout information for a user, referred to, for example, as a "Jackpot Thermometer." The jackpot payout display provides a status of a jackpot payout probability (i.e., based on probabilities, whether or not a payout is imminent or overdue). The present disclosure is applicable to conventional video slot games, video poker games, or any single or multiplayer game in which a fixed or progressive jackpot can be won. Thus, the present disclosure is applicable to land-based electronic gaming machines at a typical live casino, such as slot machines connected through a network by a central gaming server, or to online gaming at an online casino.

[0007] In one aspect of the disclosure, a graphical interface for displaying game data associated with casino games is presented. The graphical interface includes primary data relating to a casino game, and a jackpot indicator relating to the casino game that refers to a statistic that may be interpreted to indicate how soon a jackpot of the casino game is likely to pay out. The graphical display may also contain icons corresponding to a plurality of game categories, including, for example, "New Games," "Favorites," "Blackjack," "Roulette," "Tables," "Jackpots," "Classic Slots," "Video Slots," "Video Pokers," and "Other Games." Clicking on any game category icon switches the display to a corresponding games lobby page that has a number of game icons, one for each game in the game category. When a mouse hovers over any game icon in the game lobby page, game data corresponding to the game may be displayed to a player. The data (including a description of the game characteristics) may also be displayed on a separate sub-window on the display. The game data for any particular game can contain a numerical representation of a current jackpot amount corresponding to the game.

[0008] In another aspect of the disclosure, a system for indicating the jackpot payout expectancy for a game is provided. The system includes a server to generate one or more random events upon which an outcome of the game depends, and a gaming device coupled to the server and presenting to a player a display of game-play corresponding to the game. The display includes a jackpot indicator that indicates how far a jackpot cycle of the game has run since a jackpot was previously paid out.

[0009] In yet another aspect of the disclosure, a method of indicating jackpot payout expectancies for games is provided. The method includes selecting an offset value that indicates an arbitrary bias, calculating a probability of winning a jackpot relating to the game, and calculating a jackpot statistic that indicates an expectancy of winning the jackpot of the game using the offset value and the probability of winning the jackpot relating to the game. In addition, the method includes graphically displaying the jackpot statistic to players of the game.

[0010] Other aspects of the present disclosure will become apparent from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of example, certain principles of described embodiments.

[0011] Figure 1 is a block diagram illustrating one example of a system for providing a menu selection of available games to participants.

[0012] Figure 2 is an example of a graphical interface display by the system of Figure 1.

[0013] Figure 3 is another example of a graphical interface display by the system of Figure 1.

[0014] Figure 4 is a flowchart depicting one example of a method of indicating jackpot payout expectancies for a game.

[0015] The present disclosure includes a menu system for live or online gaming that has a display of jackpot payout information for gaming participants. The jackpot payout information may allow participants to rapidly assess a status of various jackpot casino games to determine which game to play, based on a likelihood of an imminent jackpot payout. For instance, as different games have different jackpot cycles and a player generally has no knowledge of when the jackpot of a game paid out, in order to aid game selection, a payout statistic (i.e., a jackpot thermometer) is provided to players that indicates how far a jackpot cycle of a game has run since the jackpot was last paid out. The statistic can be displayed graphically as a slider bar or as a thermometer icon, for example.

[0016] Referring now to Figure 1, one example of a system for providing a menu selection of available games to participants is illustrated. The system includes an electronic gaming device 102 coupled through a communication network 104 to a server 106. The electronic gaming device 102 allows a participant (or user, more generally) to play casino games by, for example, presenting the participant a display of game-play. In addition, the electronic gaming device 102 may receive user input and transmit the user input to through the communication network 104 (such as the Internet) to the server 106 via a wireline or wireless interface, for example. Thus, the electronic gaming device 102 may be a slot machine at a live casino, for example, or a personal computer allowing a user to participate in online gaming.

[0017] In the form of an online casino, within the system illustrated in Figure 1, the electronic gaming device 102 is a client workstation and the server 106 is a gaming server remote from the electronic gaming device 102, but linked thereto by the communication network 104, such as the Internet. One or more casino games are then executable by selection of a user of the online casino. Each game offered by the casino includes a server process, which is executable in the gaming server, and a client process, which is executable in the client workstation. The server process generates, upon request of the client process, one or more random events upon which an outcome of the casino game depends. Such random events can correspond, for example, to the roll of a die, the spin of a roulette wheel or the deal of a playing card, depending on which particular casino game is being played by the player. The client process, on the other hand, presents to the user or player a simulation of the casino game being played. The client process also enables the player to place wagers on, and to control the progress of, the casino game, and displays to the player the outcome of the game as a function of the random events generated by the server process.

[0018] In order to communicate with the gaming server of the online casino, the client workstation operates under control of a casino client interface program 108. The client interface program 108 includes a menu subsystem or menu selection system that displays to the player a menu of casino games that are offered by the particular online casino. The electronic gaming device 106 may present a graphical user interface ("GUI") including the menu selection system to the player. The player is then able to select any one of the games that he wishes to play. When selecting a particular game for the first time, the casino client interface program 108 causes a software program corresponding to the client process for the particular casino game to be downloaded from the gaming server to the electronic gaming device 102, where the program is stored locally on a storage device, such as a hard disk drive. Once downloaded, the player can then install the software program on the electronic gaming device 102. Once the client process for a particular casino game has been downloaded and installed in this manner, the casino game can be played without the necessity for a further download.

[0019] In one particular menu selection system, a list of games that are available for play at an online casino is displayed to the player as an unstructured, tiled display of individual game display windows. Each game display window includes a name of a corresponding game, as well as salient details and rules associated with the game. Where a client process associated with a particular game has not yet been downloaded from the gaming server to the electronic gaming device 102, the corresponding game display window in the menu subsystem includes an icon that can be activated by the player to initiate a download of the corresponding client process from the gaming server to the electronic gaming device 102.

[0020] The server 106 may also include a categorization facility 110 to categorize each one of the different casino games available on the server 106 into one or more different categories. Examples of such categories include, for example, progressive jackpot games, table games, video poker games, slots games, and new games that have not previously been accessible through the menu system. The categorization can also include other categories of casino games, namely favorites, which are games that are preferred by the player, and recommended games. Any casino game can be categorized into more than one different category. For example, a particular game may be classified as a video poker game, as well as being categorized as a jackpot game.

[0021] The client interface program 106 can then present the menu selection system including the categorized casino games to the user. Figure 2 is one example of a GUI home page 200 including a presentation of a menu selection system that corresponds to an overview mode, and Figure 3 is another example of a GUI games lobby page 300 that corresponds to a detailed mode.

[0022] The home page 200, which is a composite web page, displays an arrangement of game category icons 202

(such as "New Games" or "Jackpots"), which represent categories of games available for play at the online casino. In this example, the game category icons 202 are active web links that can be used to invoke a corresponding games lobby page. The home page 200 also displays several icons that link to web pages that display information about other online casino or gaming information, such as, for example, promotions 204, news 206, a user's account information 208, banking options 210, help information 212, support contacts 214, and advanced user features 216.

[0023] Upon selection of one of the game category icons 202, a corresponding games lobby page is presented to the user, such as the games lobby page 300 illustrated in Figure 3. The games lobby page 300 displays the games available for play at the casino for the selected category. The different game categories can be displayed to the player as a series of tabbed categories 302 on the GUI, according to a display standard that is well known in the art. In this example, four tabs are illustrated, which are labeled All (including Tables, Video Pokers, and Slots games), Slots (including Jackpot games), Tables (for table games), and Video Pokers. The user is able to view game data relating to all the casino games in any desired category by selecting a corresponding tab for that game category.

[0024] Primary game data of all the casino games in a selected tabbed game category is displayed in a scrollable window on the display screen page 200. Primary game data relating to any casino game may include a name of the casino game and a brief description of a type of the casino game, a set of rules applicable to the casino game, and a status of the casino game. The status of the casino game is active when the casino game is ready for play by the user and inactive when the game is not ready for play by the user. The game status is set to be inactive when a client process of the casino game has not previously been downloaded from a gaming server and stored locally on a storage device on the electronic gaming device 102, or when an updated version of the client process of the casino game is available on the gaming server and should be downloaded in order for the game to be played by the player.

[0025] When a particular category tab is highlighted or selected, all available casino games in that category are displayed as an arrangement of activatable icons 304 in a scrollable window, for example. Double clicking on any game icon 304 causes that game to open and execute.

[0026] In addition, when primary game data, such as the icons 304, of any particular casino game is displayed in the scrollable window, secondary game data corresponding to the highlighted or selected game is displayed in an adjacent non-scrollable game window 306, for example. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the type of detailed information displayed in the game data window will be dependent of the category in which the particular game has been classified. (In the illustration shown in Figure 3, not all of the categories illustrated in Figure 2 are shown).

[0027] Also included in the game data window 306 is a "Jackpot Thermometer" 308 that corresponds to the particular highlighted game. Referring to Figure 3, the "All" tab is highlighted and visible attributes of the Wowpot Classic Slot game are shown in the game data window 302, including a jackpot payout 310 of \$1,255,000.00 and a representative jackpot thermometer reading 312 of "100". In practice, each game will have its own particular jackpot thermometer reading that is computed in real-time by a casino gaming server. The jackpot thermometer in Figure 3 is represented as a horizontal slider bar. Of course, the jackpot thermometer may be illustrated in many other forms as well.

[0028] In a variation of the example shown in Figure 3, the different game categories and the different games in each game category can also be displayed in a conventional fly-out or pop-up window menu display, of a type that is well known in the Windows operating system from the Microsoft Corporation.

[0029] The "Jackpot Thermometer" 310 shown in Figure 3 refers to a statistic for a game that may be interpreted to indicate how soon a prize, or jackpot, of the game according to the pay tables is likely to pay out. The jackpot may be a fixed prize, or may be progressive in nature, with no upper limit.

[0030] In one aspect of the present disclosure, the probability of winning a jackpot on any turn of a game is the reciprocal of the number of all possible outcomes of the game, which is referred to as the jackpot cycle of the game. For example, the jackpot cycle of a three-reel slot game, each reel having 30 symbols of which only one is a jackpot symbol, is 27,000. This means that, on average, 27,000 turns of the game must be played out in order for the jackpot to be won.

[0031] Using a jackpot cycle theory, the Jackpot Thermometer statistic or reading 312, T, can be calculated as:

$$T = \text{Offset} + (\# \text{ of turns since last jackpot win}) / (\text{Jackpot Cycle of Game}) \times 100$$

where the Offset refers to the initial payout percentage of the game.

[0032] The "Offset" is an arbitrarily chosen bias for the calculated statistic, which can be chosen by a game operator to establish the number range and sensitivity of the statistic T. Adjusting the statistic T may assist in attracting players to play a game. As an example, the Offset can be chosen to be 80%. When the jackpot pays out, the statistic T will revert to 80%, and increases steadily until, after a number of turns of the game equal to the jackpot cycle without the jackpot paying out, the statistic T is equal to 180%. After a number of turns of the game exceeding the jackpot cycle without the jackpot paying out, the statistic T will exceed 180%. Thus, a statistic T of 80% may indicate to the player that a particular game is "cold" and is unlikely to yield a jackpot prize, while a statistic T of 170% and above may indicate

a "hot" game where the jackpot payout is imminent or overdue based on calculated probabilities. As another example, the Offset can be chosen to be 0%, so that when T is 0% the game is "cold" and when T is 100% the game is "hot." It is expected that games with a high value of the statistic T will be attractive to players and promote play of such games.

[0033] Figure 4 is a flowchart depicting one example of a method of indicating jackpot payout expectancies for a game according to described embodiments. Initially, as shown at block 402, an offset value is selected as an arbitrary bias for the game. Next, the jackpot cycle, or probability of winning the jackpot of the game, is calculated, as shown at block 404. Following, the jackpot statistic, T, can be calculated, as shown above and indicated at block 406, to determine a number relating to an expectancy of winning the jackpot of the game. The jackpot statistic can then be graphically displayed to players of the game, as shown at block 408.

[0034] The Jackpot Thermometer reading 312, T, can be calculated in other manners as well. For example, if Jackpot Payout #1 occurred at time t(1), Jackpot Payout #2 occurred at time t(2), ..., Jackpot Payout #(n-1) occurred at time t(n-1); and Jackpot Payout #n occurred at time t(n), the interval between successive jackpot payouts would be:

$\text{delta}(i) = t(i) - t(i-1)$, where $i = 2, \dots, n$ (where $n = \text{any number greater than } 2$) Considering, for example, the six most recent jackpot payouts, the average time between successive jackpot payouts is: $A = \text{sum}(\text{delta}(i)) / 5$, where $i = 2, 3, 4, 5, \text{ or } 6$. Thus, T can be calculated as follows:

$$T = \text{Offset} + (\text{Elapsed time since last jackpot payout} / A) \times 100,$$

where A is the average time between payouts and the Offset is defined as described above.

[0035] When T is calculated in this way and the Offset is determined, for example, to be 80%, a value T that is close to the Offset will indicate to a player that the game is "cold" and is unlikely to yield a jackpot prize, while a statistic T of 170% and above indicates a "hot" game where the jackpot payout is imminent or overdue.

[0036] Thus, in one form, the jackpot thermometer 310 indicates a conceptual amount of time remaining for a jackpot to be won. In another view, the jackpot thermometer 310 indicates the probability of winning the jackpot for the particular game. Of course, the jackpot thermometer 310 is only an indicator calculated using probability theory. Thus, the chances of winning the jackpot are independent of the statistic T (reading 312). However, the jackpot thermometer 310 can be effectively used, for example, as a promotion device to solicit gaming activity of certain games.

[0037] In certain embodiments, a Jackpot Thermometer can be displayed next to a game icon 304 to allow a user to immediately determine which games are "hot" (i.e. the jackpot payout is overdue based on probability calculations). Alternatively, a display of "hot" or "cold" corresponding to a Jackpot Thermometer for each game can be shown next to a game icon 304 rather than the Jackpot Thermometer illustration, or both the Jackpot Thermometer illustration and a display of "hot" or "cold" can be shown next to a game icon 304. "Hot" or "cold" games can also be identified by highlighting game icons in a particular color (such as red for "hot" and blue for "cold"), or by any other means of distinguishing an icon from other icons.

[0038] As mentioned above, the games that appear in "Jackpot" game categories (such as Jackpots, Classic Slots, Video Slots, Video Pokers, Table, and Other Games) can be progressive games, i.e., games that are networked between a plurality of casinos, each of which have a single progressive jackpot that any player participating at any of the networked casinos may win, irrespective of the casino from which that player plays the progressive game. There will, therefore, only be a single, universal, network-wide Jackpot Thermometer reading that is computed by a progressive gaming server, such as the server 106 shown in Figure 1. The Jackpot Thermometer reading displayed in the lobbies of each casino will, therefore, be the same for all casinos.

[0039] For any non-progressive game, however, each casino gaming server computes its own local Jackpot Thermometer reading for the non-progressive game that will be different from one online casino to another. Thus, a non-progressive game may have a Jackpot Thermometer reading that indicates that the game is "hot" in the lobby of online casino X while, at the same time, a different Jackpot Thermometer reading indicating that the game is "cold" in the casino lobby of online casino Y. A player who wishes to play a particular game may, therefore, elect to compare the Jackpot Thermometer readings of that game at a plurality of different online casinos and decide to play the game at the online casino at which the game has the highest Jackpot Thermometer reading.

[0040] While present embodiments have been described as they relate to online casinos, it should be understood that the jackpot statistic can also be used to show the status of jackpot payouts for electronic gaming machines in land-based casinos. The electronic gaming machines can be connected through a network, and can display the Jackpot Thermometer corresponding to the status of jackpot payouts of progressive or non-progressive games.

[0041] Since many modifications, variations, and changes in detail can be made to the described embodiments, it is intended that all matters in the foregoing description and shown in the accompanying drawings be interpreted as illustrative

and not in a limiting sense. Further, it is intended to be understood that the following clauses further describe aspects of the present application.

(1) A menu system for live or online gaming that has a display of jackpot payout information for gaming participants, the system comprising:

a gaming server; and

an electronic gaming device coupled through a communication network to the server, where the electronic gaming device allows a participant to play casino games by presenting the participant a display of game-play, where the electronic gaming device may receive user input and transmit the user input through the communication network to the server, where the electronic gaming device displays jackpot payout information relating to a game that allows participants to rapidly assess a status of jackpot games to determine which game to play, based on a likelihood of an imminent jackpot payout.

(2) The system of clause (1), wherein the jackpot payout information includes a payout statistic that indicates how far a jackpot cycle of a game has run since the jackpot was last paid out.

(3) The system of clause (2), wherein the statistic is displayed graphically as a slider bar or as a thermometer icon.

(4) The system of clause (1), (2) or (3), wherein the electronic gaming device is a client workstation and the server is a gaming server remote from the electronic gaming device, and linked thereto by the communication network.

(5) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), or (4), wherein each game offered for play includes a server process, which is executable by the gaming server, and a client process, which is executable by the client workstation.

(6) The system of clause (5), wherein the server process generates, upon request of the client process, one or more random events upon which an outcome of the game depends.

(7) The system of clause (5) or (6), wherein the client process presents to the participant a simulation of the game being played.

(8) The system of clause (5), (6), or (7), wherein the client process enables the participant to place wagers on, and to control the progress of, the casino game, and displays to the player the outcome of the game as a function of the random events generated by the server process.

(9) The system of clause (4), (5), (6), (7), or (8), wherein the client workstation operates under control of a casino client interface program that includes a menu selection system that displays to the participant a menu of casino games that are offered for play.

(10) The system of clause (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), or (9), wherein when a participant selects a particular game for the first time, the casino client interface program causes a software program corresponding to the client process for that particular game to be downloaded from the gaming server to the electronic gaming device, where the program is stored locally on a storage device.

(11) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), or (10), wherein the electronic gaming device presents a graphical user interface (GUI) including the menu selection system to the participant.

(12) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10) or (11), wherein a list of games available for play are displayed to the participant as an unstructured, tiled display of individual game display windows.

(13) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), or (12) wherein the gaming server includes a categorization facility to categorize each one of the different games available on the gaming server into one or more different categories.

(14) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12) or (13), wherein the game is a progressive game that is networked between a plurality of casinos, where each game is tied to a single progressive jackpot that any player participating at any of the networked casinos may win, irrespective of the casino from which the player plays the progressive game.

(15) The system of clause (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), or (14) wherein the jackpot payout information includes a single, universal, network-wide jackpot reading that is computed by the gaming server.

(16) A graphical interface for displaying jackpot payout information for gaming participants comprising:

a statistic for a game that may be interpreted to indicate how soon a prize, or jackpot, of the game is likely to pay out, wherein the statistic is calculated by $[T = \text{Offset} + (\# \text{ of turns since last jackpot win}) / (\text{Jackpot Cycle of the Game}) \times 100]$, where the Offset refers to the initial payout percentage of the game and the Jackpot Cycle of the Game is a probability of winning a jackpot on any turn of the game

(17) The graphical interface of clause (16), wherein the Jackpot Cycle of the Game is the reciprocal of a number of possible outcomes of the game.

(18) The graphical interface of clause (16) or (17), further including a display of an arrangement of game category

icons that represent categories of games available for play.

(19) The graphical interface of clause (18), wherein the game category icons are active web links that can be used to invoke a corresponding games lobby page.

(20) The graphical interface of clause (18) or (19), wherein, upon selection of one of the game category icons, a corresponding games lobby page is presented to the user that displays the games available for play.

(21) The graphical interface of clause (18), (19) or (20), wherein game categories are displayed to the player as a series of tabbed categories

(22) The graphical interface of clause (16), (17), (18), (19), (20) or (21), further including a display of primary game data of games in a selected tabbed game category including a name of the casino game and a brief description of a type of the casino game, a set of rules applicable to the casino game, and a status of the casino game.

(23) The graphical interface of clause (16), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21) or (22), further including a display of secondary game data including a jackpot payout amount and a representative jackpot thermometer statistic.

(24) The graphical interface of clause (16), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21), (22) or (23), wherein the statistic is computed in real-time

(25) A method of indicating jackpot payout expectancies for a game comprising:

selecting an offset value for the game;

calculating a jackpot cycle, or probability of winning the jackpot of the game;

calculating a jackpot statistic, T, to determine a number relating to an expectancy of winning the jackpot of the game, using the offset value and the jackpot cycle; and

graphically displaying the jackpot statistic to players of the game.

(26) The method of clause (25), wherein the jackpot statistic indicates a conceptual amount of time remaining for a jackpot to be won.

(27) The method of clause (25) or (26), wherein the jackpot statistic indicates the probability of winning the jackpot for the particular game.

[0042] Various embodiments have been described. Those skilled in the art will understand, however, that changes and modifications may be made to the embodiments described without departing from the true scope of the present invention, which is defined by the following claims.

Claims

1. A graphical interface for displaying game data associated with casino games, the graphical interface comprising:

primary data relating to a casino game; and

a jackpot indicator relating to the casino game that refers to a statistic that may be interpreted to indicate how soon a jackpot of the casino game is likely to pay out.

2. A graphical interface incorporated in a gaming device, the gaming device being coupled to a server which generates one or more random events upon which an outcome of a casino game depends, the graphical interface being such as to display primary data relating to the casino game and a jackpot indicator relating to the casino game that refers to a statistic that may be interpreted to indicate how soon a jackpot of the casino game is likely to pay out.

3. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, further comprising an arrangement of game category icons each of which represent categories of games available for play.

4. The graphical interface of claim 3, wherein the game category icons are displayed as a series of tabbed categories.

5. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, further comprising an arrangement of game icons each of which represent games available for play, and wherein one of the game icons represents the casino game, and wherein the primary data relating to the casino game is listed near the game icon.

6. The graphical interface of claim 5, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is displayed adjacent the game icon representing the casino game.

7. The graphical interface of claim 5, wherein the game icons are active web links invokable to load a corresponding

game lobby page.

8. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, further comprising icons that link to web pages that display information including promotions, news; account information, banking options, help information, and support contacts.
9. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the primary data relating to the casino game includes a name of the casino game, a brief description of a type of the casino game, a set of rules applicable to the casino game, and a status of the casino game.
10. The graphical interface of claim 9, wherein the status of the casino game is active when the casino game is ready for play.
11. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the primary data relating to the casino game is displayed in a webpage window, and the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is displayed in an adjacent window.
12. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game indicates an amount of the jackpot and a jackpot payout statistic.
13. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is a graphical indicator represented as a horizontal slide bar.
14. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is a statistic computed in real-time.
15. The graphical interface of claim 1, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is a statistic, T, calculated by:

$$T = \text{Offset} + (\text{a number of game plays since last jackpot payout}) / (\text{Jackpot Cycle of the casino game}) \times 100,$$

where the Offset refers to an arbitrary bias selected for the casino game and the Jackpot Cycle refers to a probability of winning a jackpot on any turn of the casino game.

16. The graphical interface of claim 15, wherein the Jackpot Cycle is the reciprocal of a number of all possible outcomes of the casino game.
17. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator can be interpreted to indicate if a jackpot payout is imminent.
18. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game is a statistic, T, calculated by:

$$T = \text{Offset} + (\text{Elapsed time since last jackpot payout}) / (A) \times 100,$$

where the Offset refers to an arbitrary bias selected for the casino game and where A is an average time between successive jackpot payouts.

19. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, wherein the jackpot indicator relating to the casino game indicates how far a jackpot cycle of the game has run since a jackpot was previously paid out, wherein the jackpot cycle of the casino game refers to a probability of winning a jackpot on any turn of the casino game.
20. The graphical interface of claim 1 or 2, further comprising an illustration of hot or cold next to the jackpot indicator.

21. A system for indicating the jackpot payout expectancy for a game comprising:

a server to generate one or more random events upon which an outcome of the game depends; and
a gaming device coupled to the server and presenting to a player a display of game-play corresponding to the
game, the display including a jackpot indicator that indicates how far a jackpot cycle of the game has run since
a jackpot was previously paid out.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device couples to the server through a communication network.

23. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device displays to the player a menu of games offered for play within
a graphical interface.

24. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device displays the jackpot indicator graphically as a slider bar.

25. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device displays the jackpot indicator graphically as a thermometer icon.

26. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device enables the player to place wagers on, and to control the
progress of, the game.

27. The system of claim 21, wherein the gaming device displays to the player an outcome of the game as a function of
the random events generated by the server.

28. The system of claim 21, wherein the server is operated by an online casino and the gaming device is located remote
from the server and operated by a player of the online casino.

29. The system of claim 21, wherein the server calculates a value of the jackpot indicator by:

$$\text{Jackpot Indicator} = \text{Offset} + (\text{a number of game plays since last jackpot win}) / (\text{Jackpot Cycle of the casino game}) \times 100,$$

where the Offset refers to an arbitrary bias selected for the game and the Jackpot Cycle refers to a probability of
winning the jackpot on any run of the game.

30. The system of claim 21, wherein the server calculates a value of the jackpot indicator by:

$$\text{Jackpot Indicator} = \text{Offset} + (\text{Elapsed time since last jackpot payout}) / (A) \times 100,$$

where the Offset refers to an arbitrary bias selected for the game and where A is an average time between successive
jackpot payouts.

31. The system of claim 21, further comprising a second server to generate one or more random events upon which
an outcome of a second game depends, and wherein a single jackpot relates to the game and the second game,
and wherein the gaming device displays a universal jackpot indicator that indicates how far a combined jackpot
cycle of the game and the second game has run since a jackpot of either the game or the second game was previously
paid out.

32. A method of indicating jackpot payout expectancies for games comprising:

selecting an offset value that indicates an arbitrary bias of a game;
calculating a probability of winning a jackpot relating to the game;
calculating a jackpot statistic that indicates an expectancy of winning the jackpot of the game using the offset
value and the probability of winning the jackpot relating to the game; and
graphically displaying the jackpot statistic to players of the game.

33. A computer readable medium containing program code for causing a microprocessor to execute the method of claim 32.

34. The method of claim 32, further comprising graphically displaying an amount of the jackpot that can be won on the game.

35. The method of claim 32, wherein the jackpot statistic indicates how far a jackpot cycle of the game has ran since the jackpot was previously paid out.

36. The method of claim 32, wherein calculating the jackpot statistic that indicates the expectancy of winning the jackpot of the game comprises solving the following equation:

Jackpot Indicator = the offset value + (a number of game plays since last jackpot win)/(the probability of winning the jackpot relating to the game)x 100.

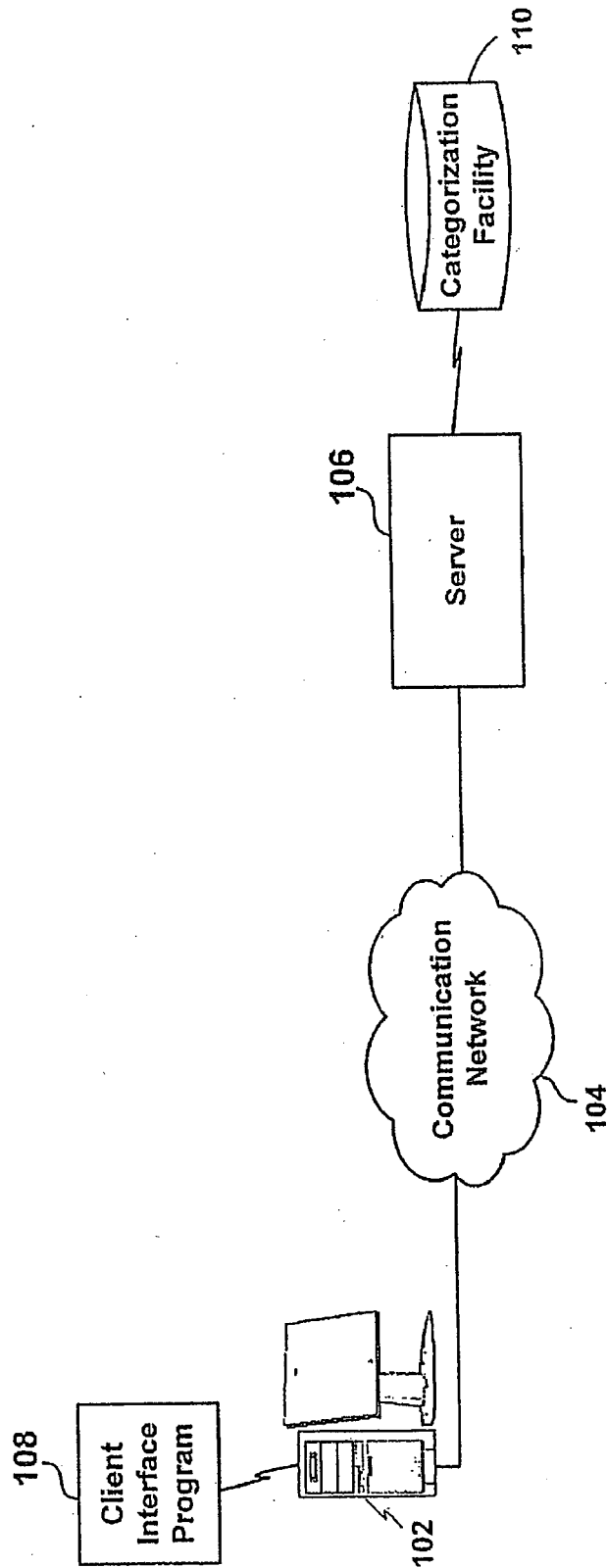


FIGURE 1

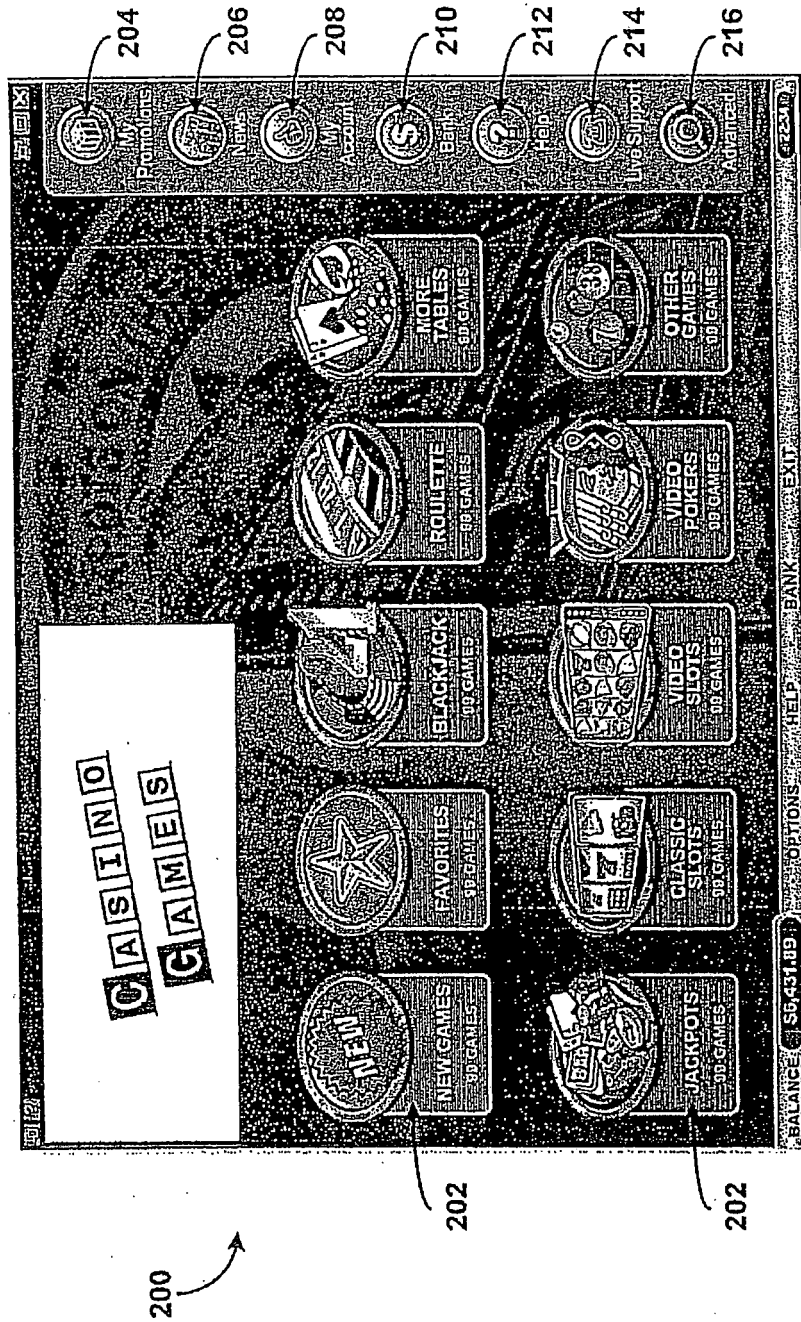


FIGURE 2

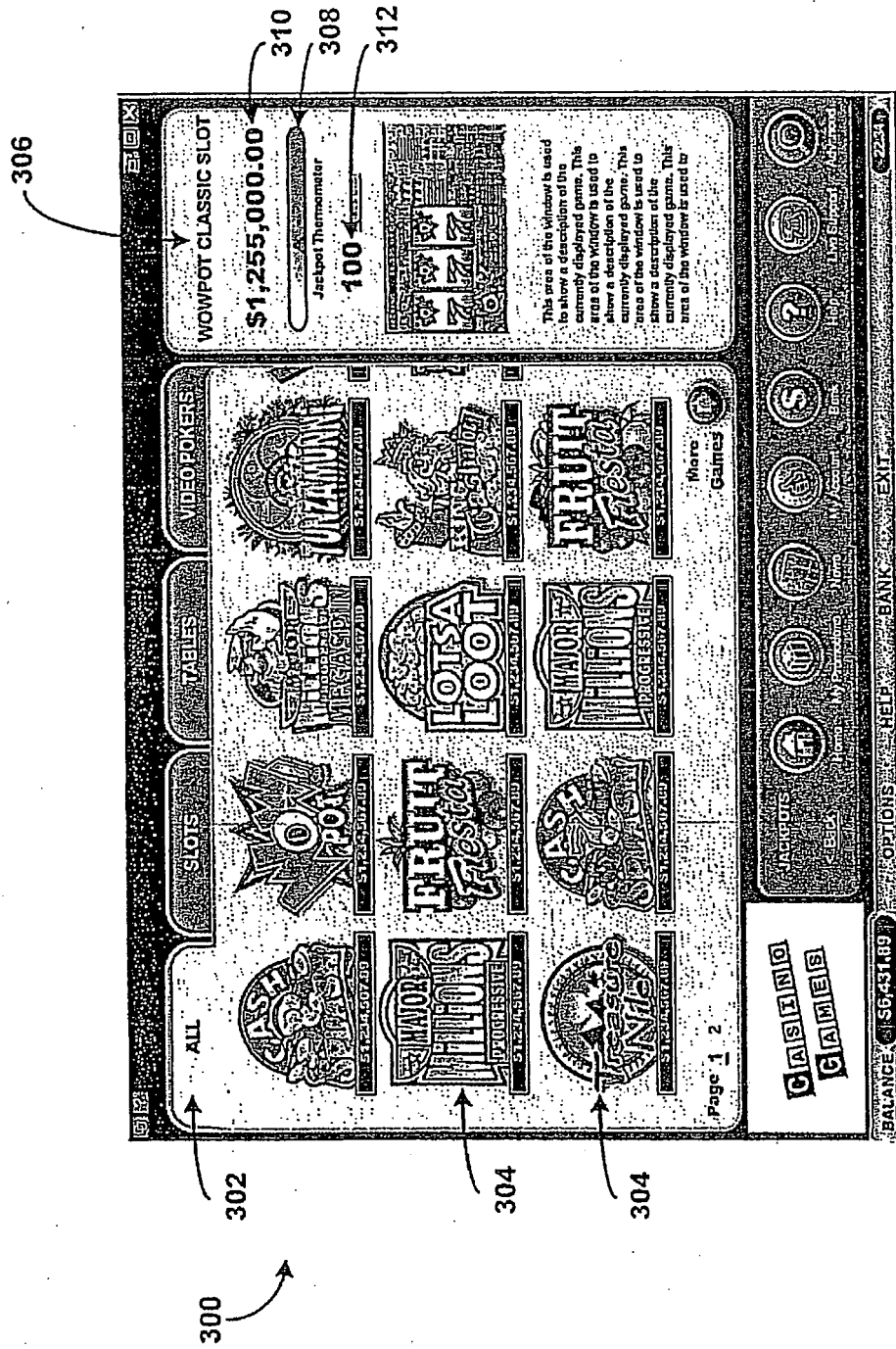


FIGURE 3

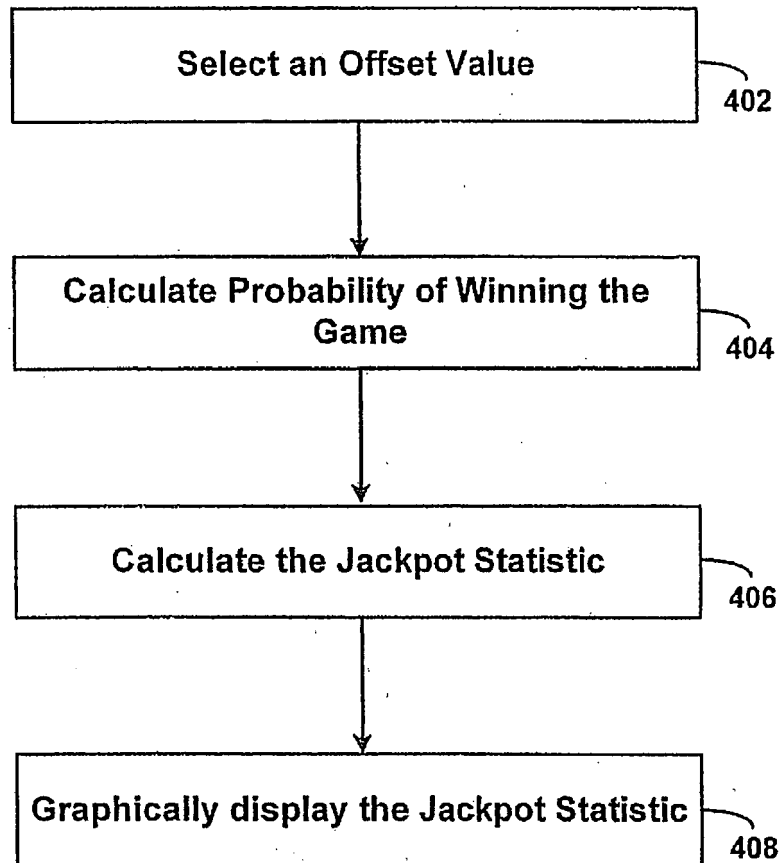


FIGURE 4



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 07 25 3250

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 7 January 2008	Examiner Van Dop, Erik
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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07-01-2008

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