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(54) **Method for selection control**

(57) The present invention relates to a method for selection control for a virtual scratch-card game, comprising the steps: displaying a first layer (1a) of a plurality of selectable game objects within a display area (5); activating a first selected game object of said plurality of selectable game objects in said first layer (1a); removing said first selected game object from said first layer (1a) and displaying a first game object of a plurality of selecta-

ble game objects in a second layer (2a) having a first game symbol (A, B, C) of a plurality of game symbols; activating a second selected game object of said plurality of selectable game objects in said second layer (2a); and removing said second selected game object in said second layer (2a) and displaying a first game object of a plurality of game objects in a third layer (3a) having a second game symbol (A, B, C) of said plurality of game symbols.

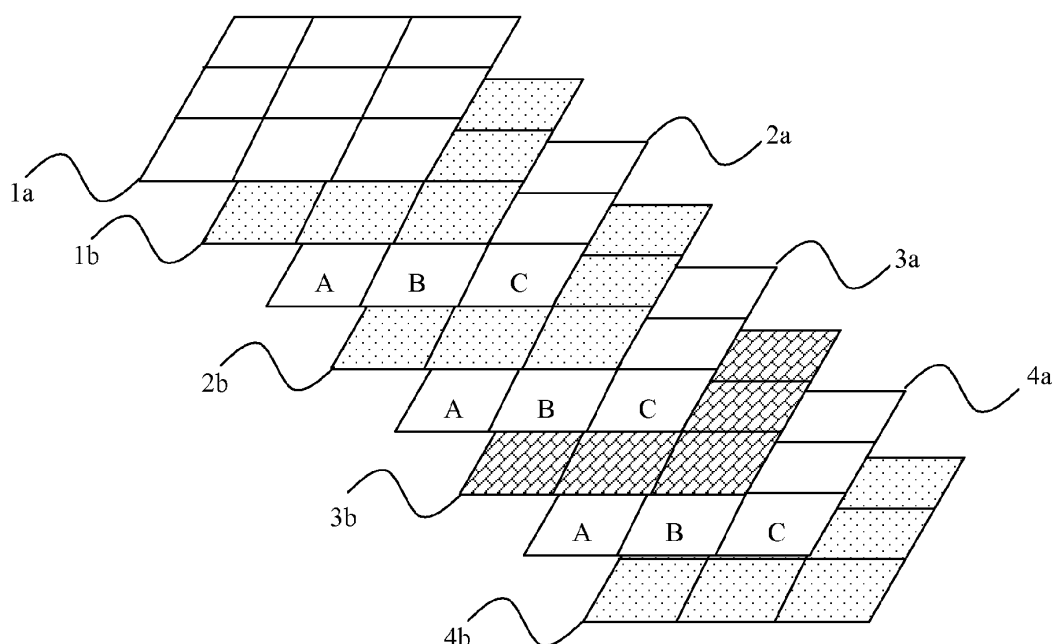


FIG. 1

Description

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to virtual games, and particularly to a method for selection control for virtual games.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Today, several methods exist for selection control for virtual scratch-card games. All of these methods have in common that a virtual scratch-card displays a plurality of game objects, which game objects after selection of such a game object displays a game symbol.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] An object of the present invention is to improve selection control for a virtual scratch-card game.

[0004] At an insight by the inventor improved selection control is achieved by the possibility of removing already displayed game symbols after reselecting a previously selected game object.

[0005] A method implementing such a selection control is defined by the appended claims.

[0006] By providing a method for selection control for a virtual scratch-card game, comprising the steps of displaying a first layer of a plurality of selectable game objects within a display area; activating a first selected game object of the plurality of selectable game objects in the first layer; removing the first selected game object from the first layer and displaying a first game object of a plurality of selectable game objects in a second layer having a first game symbol of a plurality of game symbols; activating a second selected game object of the plurality of selectable game objects in the second layer; and removing the second selected game object in the second layer and displaying a first game object of a plurality of game objects in a third layer having a second game symbol of the plurality of game symbols, an improved selection control is achieved by the possibility of removal of a previously selected game symbol.

[0007] By preferably also displaying each game symbol displayed in the display area in a second display area separate from the display area, also game symbols removed from the display area can still be utilized for determining a winning set.

[0008] By preferably providing the second layer with a first background layer having a first attribute, and the third layer with a second background layer having a second attribute different from the first attribute, the selection control of game objects in different levels is facilitated.

[0009] The method preferably also comprises the step of displaying the first layer partly on top of the second layer, in turn displayed partly on top of the third layer, such that the second layer is partly visible and the third layer is partly visible, whereby it is directly evident which

game objects relate to which layer. For a more simple display structure, the method alternatively comprises displaying the first layer on top of the second layer, in turn displayed on top of the third layer.

[0010] Further features and advantages of the present invention will be evident from the following description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description of embodiments given below and the accompanying figures, which are given by way of illustration only, and thus, are not limitative of the present invention, wherein:

Fig. 1 schematically shows a virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 schematically shows a virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game being displayed in 3D and being scratched to multiple levels.

Fig. 3 schematically shows a virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game having multiple display areas according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0012] In the following description, for purpose of explanation and not limitation, specific details are set forth, such as particular techniques and applications in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. However, it will be apparent for a person skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced in other embodiments that depart from these specific details. In other instances, detailed description of well-known methods and apparatuses are omitted so as not to obscure the description of the present invention with unnecessary details.

[0013] A method for selection control for a virtual scratch-card game according to a first embodiment of the present invention will now be described with reference to Figs. 1-2.

[0014] The virtual scratch-card game will in this embodiment be described as a virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game. Other virtual scratch-card games chance, such as e.g. lottery games and pick and click are also contemplated as virtual scratch-card games wherein utilization of the inventive idea of removal of selected game symbols is useful.

[0015] The virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game comprises a plurality of layers, in this case exemplified by four layers. However, the inventive idea is applicable also to three layers or more than four layers.

[0016] Each layer of the virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game comprises a plurality of game objects, in this

case exemplified by a 3x3 matrix. Generally any form of each layer is contemplated, such as smaller or larger matrixes. Also asymmetric matrixes such as e.g. 5x10 are contemplated. Even though a square game object is well defined and typically used, also irregularly shaped game objects may be used on each layer, such as other geometric shapes, digging a pit in ground, blowing a way through a wall, or moving in a virtual room in 3D. Even though well defined picks of well defined game objects is straight forward, it is also possible to utilize e.g. random picking of game objects. Random picking is in such a case preferably selected by a player by activation of a button. This may be particularly useful for an irregularly shaped game object. Each layer preferably also comprises a background layer, which background layers preferably have attributes differing from each other.

[0017] Each virtual scratch-card game is preferably generated in a server system, which in a secure way communicates game data to a game device. The game device can e.g. be an on-line device having a web browser, such as a computer, cellular phone, or a TV, or an off-line device having a dedicated virtual game application, which e.g. is loaded with a number of games.

[0018] The topmost, first layer 1a preferably has no background layer 1b, since no game symbols are displayed therein. It is however possible to provide also the first layer 1a with a background layer. The first layer 1a is displayed with a plurality of game objects within a display area 5. The nine game objects are in this case well defined by visible lines, but all nine game objects could e.g. be covered by a scenery obscuring the exact position for the game objects. When a game object in the first layer 1a is selected and activated by e.g. a mouse/marker click, the selected game object is removed from the display. By removing a game object in the first layer 1a a game object of a plurality of game objects in the second layer 2a is displayed. The displayed game object of the second layer 2a has a game symbol, e.g. A, of a plurality of game symbols. The second layer 2a preferably has a background layer 2b having an attribute, indicating that it is a different layer than the first layer 1a.

[0019] For a typical virtual scratch-card game the game symbols are monetary values representing a winning value, e.g. by displaying three identical game symbols. Alternative symbols could e.g. be letters (A, B, C), colors (blue, green, red), animals (snake, mouse, cat), or amount of material (amount of gold vein). The attribute of a background layer can e.g. be a colored frame, a color, a pattern, or a virtual 3D environment.

[0020] After the first game object has been removed from the first layer 1 there are eight selectable game objects in the first layer and one selectable game object in the second layer 2a. Now either a game object in the first layer 1a is selected and activated, as is known in the art, or a game object in the second layer 2a is selected and activated, according to the present invention. By activating a game object in the second layer 2a, the selected game object, and its game symbol, in the second layer

2a is removed and a game object of the third layer 3a is displayed having a game symbol of the plurality of game symbols. This game symbol of the third layer may be identical to the game symbol of the second layer, or may not be identical to the game symbol of the second layer. However, the virtual scratch-card game typically requires a plurality of equal game symbols for generating a winning set of game symbols.

[0021] After a selectable game object of the second layer 2 has been removed from the second layer 2a it is possible to select and activate game objects also in the third layer 3a. By activating a game object in the third layer 3a, the selected game object, and its game symbol, in the third layer 3a is removed and a game object of the fourth layer 4a is displayed having a game symbol of the plurality of game symbols. This game symbol of the fourth layer may be identical to the game symbol of previous layers, or may not be identical to the game symbol of previous layers. However, the virtual scratch-card game typically requires a plurality of equal game symbols for generating a winning set of symbols. Although the method has been described by selecting and removing game objects directly on top of each other, the first nine picks could e.g. select and activate all nine game symbols of the second layer 2a, before any selection and activation of deeper game objects is made.

[0022] The described virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card game has 27 possible game symbols to display. A possible game may include having nine picks to find three identical game symbols. A player have in such a case not the possibility to display all game objects, but may anyway need to remove already displayed game symbols in the second layer to be able to access game symbols in the third or fourth layer. Another possible game may include having 27 picks to find three identical game symbols. A player have in such a case the possibility to display all game symbols, but will need to remove some already displayed game symbols in the second layer to be able to access game symbols in the third or fourth layer. The number of picks and/or the number of required game symbols making up a winning set can be varied obtaining different types of virtual, multi-layer, scratch-card games. Another type of game can e.g. include finding as many similar game symbols as possible, preferably with a limited number of picks in relation to the number of possible game symbols, wherein nine similar game symbols provides the highest pay-out for the game.

[0023] Another variant for pay-out from a game may e.g. include having multiple winning sets of game symbols. In such a case it is necessary to have some form of collect button, such that a player can select to collect a winning set instead of trying to go for a winning set having a higher pay-out.

[0024] Display of the different layers of game objects may be done in a plurality of ways. The first layer 1 may be a 2D display completely on top on the second layer 2, which in turn is completely on top of the third layer 3, which in turn is completely on top of layer 4. In this way

a player will perceive the game as having only one layer with exchangeable game objects. The different layers are however preferably displayed in 3D partly overlapping each other: the first layer partly on top of the second layer, in turn displayed partly on top of the third layer, such that the second layer is partly visible and the third layer is partly visible, whereby it is directly evident which game objects relate to which layer. This type of display is illustrated in Fig. 2.

[0025] A second embodiment of the present invention will next be described with reference to Fig. 3. This second embodiment of the present invention is identical to the first embodiment described above apart from the following. The game objects are displayed in a first display area 5 and game symbols displayed in the first display area 5 is also displayed in a second display area 6. The main effect of that the game symbols are also displayed in the second display area 6 is that even though a game symbol in e.g. layer 2a or 3a, which is removed due to re-scratching of the game object, is still in the game. The game is preferably ended by either that all available picks have been used, and no winning set has been displayed, or that a desired winning set has been displayed and a collect button 7 is activated, preferably in a third display area.

[0026] It will be obvious that the present invention may be varied in a plurality of ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as departure from the scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims. All such variations as would be obvious for a person skilled in the art are intended to be included within the scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

Claims

1. A method for selection control for a virtual scratch-card game, **characterized by**

- displaying a first layer (1a) of a plurality of selectable game objects within a display area (5);
- activating a first selected game object of said plurality of selectable game objects in said first layer (1a);
- removing said first selected game object from said first layer (1a) and displaying a first game object of a plurality of selectable game objects in a second layer (2a) having a first game symbol (A, B, C) of a plurality of game symbols;
- activating a second selected game object of said plurality of selectable game objects in said second layer (2a); and
- removing said second selected game object in said second layer (2a) and displaying a first game object of a plurality of game objects in a third layer (3a) having a second game symbol (A, B, C) of said plurality of game symbols.

2. The method as claimed in claim 1, **characterized by**

- displaying each game symbol displayed in said display area (5) in a second display area (6) separate from said display area (5).

3. The method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said second layer (2a) has a first background layer (2b) having a first attribute, and said third layer (3a) has a second background layer (3b) having a second attribute different from said first attribute.

4. The method as claimed in any of claims 1-3, **characterized by**

- displaying said first layer (1a) on top of said second layer (2a), in turn displayed on top of said third layer (3a).

5. The method as claimed in any of claims 1-3, **characterized by**

- displaying said first layer (1a) partly on top of said second layer (2a), in turn displayed partly on top of said third layer (3a), such that said second layer (2a) is partly visible and said third layer (3a) is partly visible.

6. The method as claimed in any of claims 1-5, wherein said virtual game is a virtual multi-layer game.

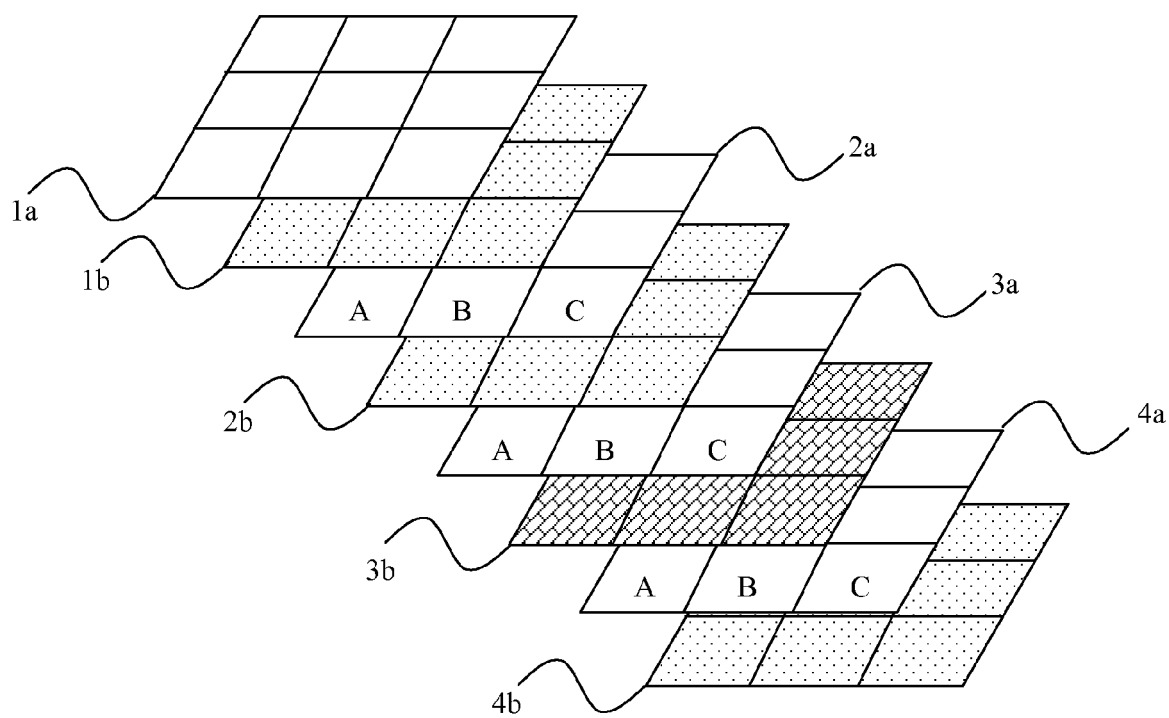


FIG. 1

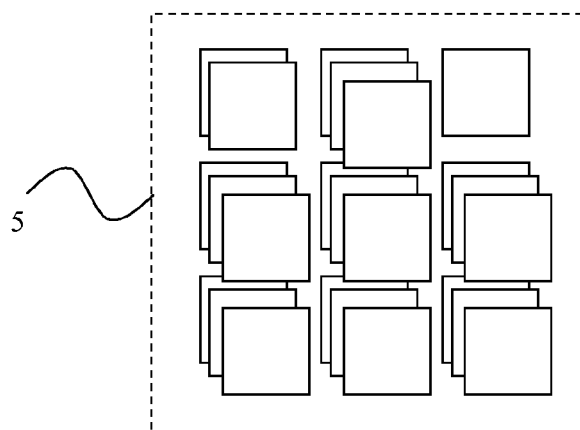


FIG. 2

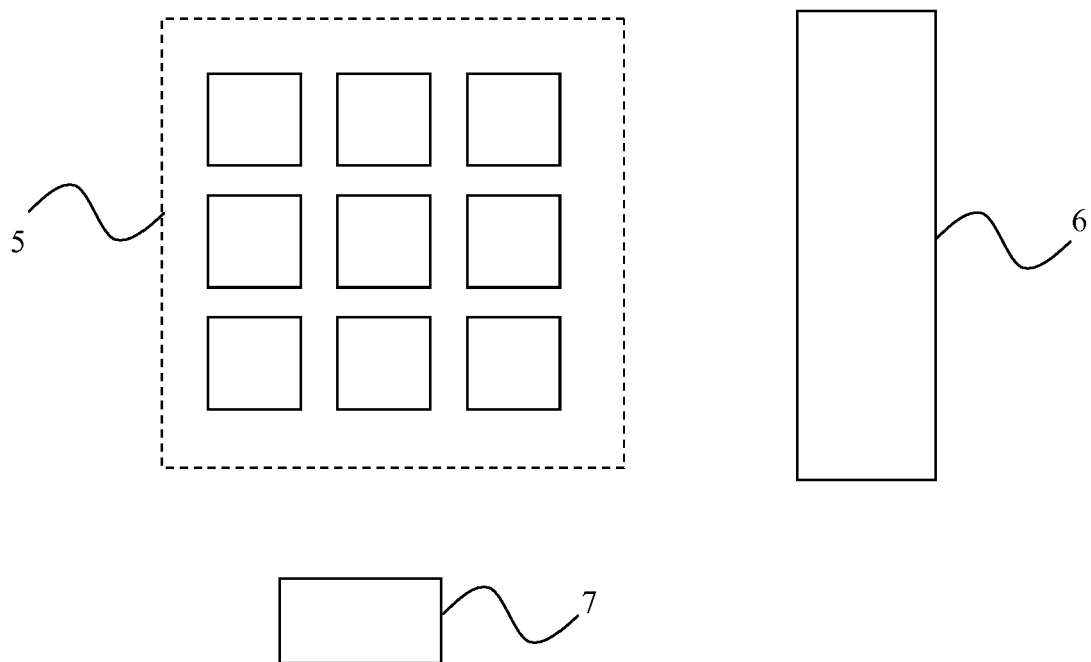


FIG. 3



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 10 19 2719

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
X	WO 2010/043256 A1 (ERICSSON TELEFON AB L M [SE]; ROOS PER [SE]; AASTROEM BO [SE]; LINDHOL) 22 April 2010 (2010-04-22) * the whole document *	1-6	INV. G07F17/32
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			G07F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 2 March 2011	Examiner Breidenich, Markus
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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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 10 19 2719

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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02-03-2011

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
WO 2010043256 A1	22-04-2010	NONE	
GB 2360466 A	26-09-2001	AU 4091401 A WO 0170356 A2	03-10-2001 27-09-2001