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APPLICATION NO.	ISSUE DATE	PATENT NO.	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	09/18/2018	10076708	163485	7235

25944 7590 08/29/2018
OLIFF PLC
P.O. BOX 320850
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850

ISSUE NOTIFICATION

The projected patent number and issue date are specified above.

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)
(application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment is 273 day(s). Any patent to issue from the above-identified application will include an indication of the adjustment on the front page.

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Application Assistance Unit (AAU) of the Office of Data Management (ODM) at (571)-272-4200.

APPLICANT(s) (Please see PAIR WEB site <http://pair.uspto.gov> for additional applicants):

Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
GREE, INC., Minato-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN
Tomohiro Tsukihara, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
Norikazu Kato, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
Tomoki Yasuhara, Minato-ku, JAPAN;

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Complete and send this form, together with the applicable fee(s), to: Mail

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Commissioner for Patents
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(571)-273-2885**

or **Fax**

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CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note Use Block 1 for any change of address)

OLIFF PLC
277 S Washington St.
Suite 500
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, EFS-Web transmitted, or facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's Name)
(S-signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO	CONFIRMATION NO
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuoyoshi YOSHIKAWA	163485	7235

TITLE OF INVENTION: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

APPLN: TYPE	ENTITY STATUS	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	UNDISCOUNTED	\$1,000.00			\$1,000.00	08/27/2018

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
J. S. McClellan	3716	463-042

<p>1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37CFR 1.363).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a Customer Number is required.</p>	<p>2. For printing on the patent front page, list</p> <p>(1) The names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively,</p> <p>(2) The name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered attorney or agent. If no name is listed, no name will be printed</p> <p>1. Oliff PLC</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
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3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

1a. NAME OF ASSIGNEE: GREE, INC. (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY) Tokyo, Japan

Please check the appropriate assignee categories (will not be printed on the patent): Individual Corporation or other private group entity Government

<p>4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issue Fee</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Advance Order - # of Copies</p>	<p>4b. Payment of Fees(s): (Please first reapply and previously paid fee shown above)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A check is enclosed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credits any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 15-0461 (enclose an extra copy of this form)</p>
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5. Change of Entity Status (from status indicated above)

Applicant certifying micro entity status. See 37 CFR 1.29

Applicant asserting small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27

Applicant changing to regular undiscounted fee status.

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NOTE: If the application was previously under micro entity status, checking this box will be taken to be a notification of loss of entitlement to micro entity status.

NOTE: Checking this box will be taken to be notification of loss of entitlement to small or micro entity status, as applicable.

NOTE: This form must be signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.31 and 1.33. See 37 CFR 1.4 for signature requirements and certifications.

Authorized Signature	/ B. Graham Nelson /	Date	August 14, 2018
Typed or printed name	B. Graham Nelson	Registration No.	72,699

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	14409219			
Filing Date:	18-Dec-2014			
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM			
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa			
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Lamont'a Johnson			
Attorney Docket Number:	163485			
Filed as Large Entity				
Filing Fees for U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
Pages:				
Claims:				
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:				
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				
UTILITY APPL ISSUE FEE	1501	1	1000	1000

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Extension-of-Time:				
Miscellaneous:				
Total in USD (\$)				1000

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	33462965
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Lamont'a Johnson
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	14-AUG-2018
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	14:39:56
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	DA
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$1000
RAM confirmation Number	081518INTEFSW00001141150461
Deposit Account	
Authorized User	

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Issue Fee Payment (PTO-85B)	Issue_Fee_Transmittal.pdf	33835	no	1
			ac7a7df3ab56d74985fbc29d012296c7bca8859e		

Warnings:

Information:

2	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	30779	no	2
			ba93dbe46437504f36893f7e3d434da8c163fd86		

Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes):	64614
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If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

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New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

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14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	07/26/2018	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			07/26/2018	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com



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APPLICATION NO./ CONTROL NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR / PATENT IN REEXAMINATION	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
14/409,219	18 December, 2014	YOSHIKAWA ET AL.	163485

OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850	EXAMINER	
	JAMES S. MCCLELLAN	
	ART UNIT	PAPER
	3716	20180723

DATE MAILED:

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Commissioner for Patents

Applicant's submission of an IDS on 7/11/2018 has been considered.

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
 Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Doc code: IDS
 Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

PTO/SB/08a (02-18)
 Approved for use through 11/30/2020. OMB 0651-0031
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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/JSM/	1	20120202575	A1	2012-08-09	Matsuno	
/JSM/	2	20090247260	A1	2009-10-01	Goto et al.	

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²ⁱ	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
/JSM/	1	2011067534	JP	A	2011-04-07	Juno Gaming Co Ltd		
/JSM/	2	2007117656	JP	A	2007-05-17	Konami Digital Entertainment		

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219	
	Filing Date		2014-12-18	
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA		
	Art Unit	3716		
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan		
	Attorney Docket Number	163485		

/JSM/	3	2001218981	JP	A	2001-08-14	Kceo Inc	×
/JSM/	4	2003260266	JP	A	2003-09-16	Namco Ltd	☒
/JSM/	5	2001259228	JP	A	2001-09-25	Enix Corp	☒

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/JSM/	1	June 26, 2018 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2017-126020.	×

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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	/James S. McClellan/	Date Considered	07/23/2018
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

- See attached certification statement.
 - The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.
- A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2018-07-11
Name/Print	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72,699

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

U.S.PATENTS						Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	20120202575	A1	2012-08-09	Matsuno	
	2	20090247260	A1	2009-10-01	Goto et al.	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²ⁱ	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1	2011067534	JP	A	2011-04-07	Juno Gaming Co Ltd		
	2	2007117656	JP	A	2007-05-17	Konami Digital Entertainment		

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	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan		
	Attorney Docket Number	163485		

	3	2001218981	JP	A	2001-08-14	Kceo Inc		×
	4	2003260266	JP	A	2003-09-16	Namco Ltd		☒
	5	2001259228	JP	A	2001-09-25	Enix Corp		☒

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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	June 26, 2018 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2017-126020.	×

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Examiner Signature	<input type="text"/>	Date Considered	<input type="text"/>
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

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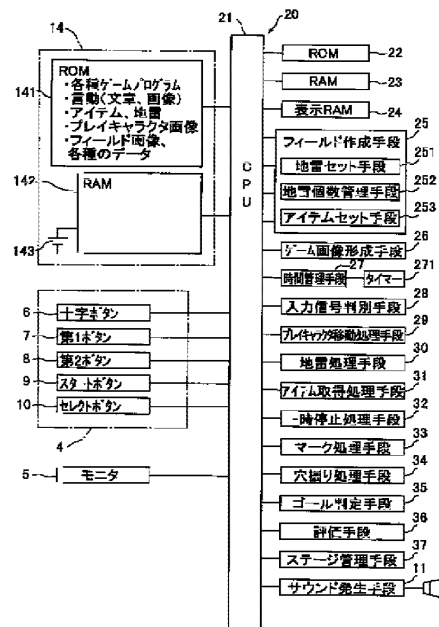
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(54) 【発明の名称】 進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置及びプレイキャラクタの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 障害物を回避しつつ、かつ他の目的もクリアしながらゴールまで到達させるという複合的でゲーム性の高いいわゆる地雷ゲームを提供する。

【解決手段】 モニタ5上に表示された碁盤状のフィールド画像のマス目の1又は複数にゲームオーバー用の地雷を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクタを非表示状態にある地雷を避けながら1マス目ずつ移動させてフィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる。プレイキャラクタの1マス目毎に移動方向を指定する十字ボタン6及び第1ボタン7と、プレイキャラクタが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている地雷の個数を数字表示すると共に、フィールド上のアイテムがセットされたマス目に星型マークを表示するフィールド作成手段25、アイテムがセットされたマス目を経由してゴール位置に到達したとき、高いゲーム評価を与える評価手段36とを備える。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 モニタ上にプレイキャラクターと基盤状のフィールドを表示し、マス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクターを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けさせながら1マス目ずつ進めて前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲームであって、操作部材からの指示に応じた方向にプレイキャラクターを1マス目ずつ移動させると共に、プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に前記障害物が設定されている個数を表示させ、かつプレイキャラクターがゴール位置に到着したと判定するとゲーム評価を与えることを特徴とするプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項2】 他のマス目と識別可能な特定のマス目を表示させ、プレイキャラクターが前記特定のマス目を経由してゴール位置に到着することで高いゲーム評価を与えることを特徴とする請求項1記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項3】 少なくとも4方向に正面が向くプレイキャラクターの画像を用意し、そのいずれかのプレイキャラクターの画像をマス目内に対応させて表示させる際に、操作部材からの方向指示に応じて、移動するマス目方向に正面が向いたプレイキャラクターを採用することを特徴とする請求項1又は2記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項4】 前記操作部材からの前後左右及び斜め方向の指示にตอบสนองして、プレイキャラクターを隣接する8個のマス目のいずれかに進めるようにしたことを特徴とする請求項1～3のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項5】 障害物が設定されている個数の表示を、プレイキャラクターが通過したマス目に対してゲーム終了まで継続させるようにしたことを特徴とする請求項1～4のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項6】 プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目についての、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている前記障害物の個数をモニタ画面の所定の位置に数字表示するようにしたことを特徴とする請求項1～5のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項7】 前記フィールド画像をモニタ画面からはみ出る大きさで表示させると共に、プレイキャラクターが進む方向と逆方向にフィールド画像を1マス目ずつ移動して表示させるようにしたことを特徴とする請求項1～6のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項8】 1つの特定マス目がモニタ画面に表示されている時、他の特定マス目がモニタ画面外となるよう

に各特定マス目の位置を設定していることを特徴とする請求項7記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項9】 スタート位置とゴール位置をフィールドの対向する辺側に設けたことを特徴とする請求項1～8のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項10】 ゲーム終了までの時間を設定し、残り時間をモニタ画面の一部に表示するようにしたことを特徴とする請求項1～9のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項11】 障害物が設定されるマス目をゲーム開始毎に無作為に設定することを特徴とする請求項1～10のいずれかに記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体。

【請求項12】 モニタ上に表示された基盤状のフィールド画像のマス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクターを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けながら1マス目ずつ通過させて前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置であって、プレイキャラクターの1マス目毎に移動方向を指定する操作部材と、プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている前記障害物の個数を表示する個数表示手段と、プレイキャラクターがゴール位置に到達したと判断したとき、ゲーム評価を与える評価手段とを備えたことを特徴とする進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置。

【請求項13】 フィールド上の特定のマス目を識別可能に表示する特定マス目表示手段を備え、前記評価手段は、前記特定マス目を経由してゴール位置に到達したとき、高いゲーム評価を与えるようにしたことを備えたことを特徴とする請求項12記載の進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、モニタ上に表示された基盤状のフィールド画像上で1マス目ずつプレイキャラクター（画像）を移動させてゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置及びプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】従来、モニタに表示された基盤状のフィールド画像の特定のマス目に爆弾を非表示状態で設定すると共に、指示部材で指示したマス目を画像的にめくると、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている爆弾の個数が表示されており、遊技者はこの数値を見ながら、爆弾の設定されているマス目を避けて他の全てのマス目をめくることが目標とする一方、爆弾が設定されている

マス目をめくるとゲームオーバーとなるゲームが知られている。

【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】従来のゲームは爆弾が設定されているマス目以外のマス目を如何に多くめくれるかを競う頭脳ゲームであり、前回と今回とで指定するマス目に位置的な連続性も要求されておらず、いわばランダム的なものであった。このようにゲーム目的が爆弾当てという単純なものであることから繰り返して行うと飽きてしまうという問題があった。

【0004】本発明は、上記に鑑みてなされたもので、障害物を回避しつつ、かつ他の目的もクリアしながらゴールまで到達させるという複合的でゲーム性の高い進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置及びプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体を提供することを目的とするものである。

【0005】

【課題を解決するための手段】請求項1記載のプレイキャラクターの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体は、モニタ上にプレイキャラクターと碁盤状のフィールドを表示し、マス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクターを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けさせながら1マス目ずつ進めて前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲームであって、操作部材からの指示に応じた方向にプレイキャラクターを1マス目ずつ移動させると共に、プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に前記障害物が設定されている個数を表示させ、かつプレイキャラクターがゴール位置に到着したと判定するとゲーム評価を与えることを特徴とするものである。

【0006】請求項12は、モニタ上に表示された碁盤状のフィールド画像のマス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクターを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けながら1マス目ずつ通過させて前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲーム装置であって、プレイキャラクターの1マス目毎に移動方向を指定する操作部材と、プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている前記障害物の個数を表示する個数表示手段と、プレイキャラクターがゴール位置に到達したと判断したとき、ゲーム評価を与える評価手段とを備えたことを特徴とするものである。

【0007】これらの構成によれば、モニタ上にプレイキャラクターと碁盤状のフィールドが表示され、マス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物が設定される。遊技者はプレイキャラクターを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けさせながら1マス目ずつ進める指示を行うことで前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位

置にプレイキャラクターを到着させるようにする。すなわち、操作部材からの指示に応じた方向にプレイキャラクターが1マス目ずつ移動されると共に、プレイキャラクターが位置するマス目については、該マス目に隣接するマス目に前記障害物が何個設定されているかの個数が表示される。そして、遊技者は周囲のマス目に対する障害物の個数を考慮しながらプレイキャラクターの進むべきマス目を決定し、指示する操作を繰り返してゴール位置にプレイキャラクターを導くと、所定のゲーム評価が与えられることになる。

【0008】

【発明の実施の形態】図1は、本発明の一実施形態に係るビデオゲーム装置の構成を説明するための図で、(a)はその平面図、(b)はその側面図である。これらの図において、ビデオゲーム装置1は、携帯型であり、制御部等が内蔵された外部ケース2と、外部ケース2の表面上部に形成された表示部3と、外部ケース2の表面下部に形成された操作部4とから構成されている。

【0009】表示部3は、ゲーム画像が表示可能な液晶パネル等からなるモニタ5が配設されてなるものである。操作部4は、左方に配設された十字ボタン6、右方に配設された第1ボタン7及び第2ボタン8、並びに、十字ボタン6と第1、第2ボタン7、8間の下方に配設されたスタートボタン9及びセレクトボタン10から構成されている。

【0010】外部ケース2の表面下部の右方コーナー部にはサウンド発生部11が構成され、外部ケース2の右側面には音量調整部12が配設されている。また、外部ケース2の裏面上半部にはROMカセット装着部13が形成されている。

【0011】モニタ5は、ゲーム内容にかかる画像を表示するものである。十字ボタン6は、十字形状を有し、各方向に押し込み可能に構成された操作部を有すると共に、各部にそれぞれスイッチが内蔵されて、押し込んだことが検知可能に構成されている。この十字ボタン6により4方向の方向指示ができると共に、隣同士のスイッチを同時に押し込むように操作することで斜め方向の検知も可能となり、合計8方向が検知し得るようになってくる。この8方向はモニタ5の画面上でプレイキャラクターを上下左右及び各斜め方向に移動指示することに対応している。

【0012】第1ボタン7は、十字キー6による方向指示を決定(確定)するものである。第2ボタン8は、ゲーム画面に後述するように所定のマークを表記し、あるいは表記されたマークの消去を指示するものである。スタートボタン9は、ゲームを開始させたり、ゲーム中において一時停止に関する指示を行うものであり、セレクトボタン10は、ゲーム種別や必要に応じてステージナンバーを指定したり、ゲームに難度が設定されている場合には、該難度を指定するものである。

【0013】サウンド発生部11は、外部ケース2の内側にスピーカを内蔵して構成され、ゲームの進行に合わせて所定の背景音楽や効果音等を出力するものであり、音量調整部12は、スピーカから出力される背景音楽や効果音等の音量を調整するものである。ROMカセット装着部13は、ROMカセット14（図2参照）を着脱自在に装着するものであり、内部にコネクタが配設されており、ROMカセット14の先端部に取り付けられたコネクタが差し込まれることで内部の制御部と電氣的に接続されるようになっている。

【0014】このように構成されたビデオゲーム装置1では、外部ケース2の左右両側を両手で把持する一方、例えば、左手の親指で十字ボタン6を押圧操作すると共に、右手で第1、第2ボタン7、8、スタートボタン9及びセレクトボタン10を適宜選択的に押圧操作することでゲームを実行することができるようになっている。

【0015】図2は、ビデオゲーム装置1の制御構成の一例を示すブロック図である。記録媒体としては、ゲームデータやプログラムデータの記憶されたROM等がプラスチックケースに収納された、いわゆるROMカセットや、光ディスク、フレキシブルディスク等であり、さらに、ゲーム回路基板に直接マウントされているものも含む。

【0016】図2において、制御部20は、記録媒体としてのROMカセット14に記憶されているゲームプログラムやゲームを構成する一要素である種々の画像データ等の各種データに基づいて、操作部4で操作された内容に応じたコマンドに対応するゲーム処理を実行するものであり、演算処理を実行させるCPU21、モニタ5への表示を制御するための制御プログラム等を記憶するROM22、処理データを一時的に記憶するRAM23、及びモニタ5へのフレーム画像を読み出し可能に更新格納する、少なくとも1画面分の記憶容量を有する表示RAM24から構成されている。表示RAM24は、例えば、1/60秒という周期で書き込みと読み出しとが交互に繰り返され、これによって残像現象による安定した画像がモニタ5に表示されるようになっている。

【0017】CPU21には、モニタ5、十字ボタン6、第1、第2ボタン7、8、スタートボタン9、セレクトボタン10及びサウンド発生部11が接続される一方、ROMカセット14が接続されるようになっている。

【0018】また、CPU21には、フィールド作成手段25、ゲーム画像形成手段26、時間管理手段27、入力信号判別手段28、プレイキャラクタ移動処理手段29、地雷処理手段30、アイテム取得処理手段31、一時停止処理手段32、マーク処理手段33、穴掘り処理手段34、ゴール判定手段35、評価手段36及びステージ管理手段37等の各機能実現手段が備えられている。

【0019】ROMカセット14は、各種のゲームプログラム、ゲーム進行上必要な予め設定されている各種のゲームデータ、基本画面を含むゲームを構成するための各種画像（フィールドを囲む柵40、地雷、アイテム41、爆発表示42、×マーク43等）や正面（図6参照）、左右（図4、10参照）及び背中（図5参照）側から見たプレイキャラクタ画像44及び解説文章画像45、更には効果音データが記憶されるROM141を有すると共に、ゲームを中断する場合に、中断時点から再開可能にするべく中断時におけるゲーム状況を保存するRAM142及びRAM142のバックアップ電池143が内蔵されて構成されたものである。なお、フィールド周辺に表示された柵40は、一部が途切れてフィールド内への出入り口が形成されており、この途切れた部分がゲームのスタート位置401（図4参照）及びゴール位置402（図8参照）として設定されている。本実施形態では、スタート位置401及びゴール位置402はフィールドの対向する辺に設けられているが、これに限定されない。

【0020】フィールド作成手段25は、碁盤状のゲームフィールド、すなわち縦横それぞれに複数からなる正方形のマスを有して形成されたフィールド画像を準備すると共に、ゲームオーバーに関連する例えば強制終了用の障害物となる例えば地雷を1または複数のマス目に設定する地雷セット手段251、地雷が設定されていないマス目に対し、各マス目（座標で表現）に対応させて、それぞれ隣接する8個のマス目（フィールドの辺では5個、コーナーでは3個）のうち地雷が設定されているマス目の個数を記憶する地雷個数管理手段252、及び1または複数種類のアイテムを1または複数のマス目に設定するアイテムセット手段253を有する。なお、設定された地雷は画面上に表示されないようにしている。また、複数のアイテムの設定位置の関係は、1つのアイテムが設定されたマス目がモニタ画面に表示されている状態では、他のアイテムは同時に表示されないようなマス目に設定されている。地雷及びアイテム41の設定マス目はマス目の縦横方向の座標として管理されている。

【0021】ゲーム画像形成手段26は、フィールド作成手段で作成されたフィールド画像をモニタ5に表示すると共に、操作部4の十字ボタン6、第1、第2ボタン7、8の操作内容とROM141のゲームプログラム及びRAM142の内容とからプレイキャラクタの画像を含むゲーム画像を決定し、表示RAM24に所定の表示画を形成させるものである。このゲーム画像形成手段26は、ゲーム開始時点でマス目に設定されている個数情報（数字）を非表示状態にしておくとともに、プレイキャラクタ44が位置するマス目に対しては、いわば穴掘り作業（又はめくり作業）を施したような演出を行って個数情報を表示状態に切替えるようにするものである。

プレイキャラクタ44が位置する現マス目のみ表示状態にしてもよいが、本実施形態では一旦表示状態にされた、すなわちプレイキャラクタ44が通過したマス目については表示状態を継続するようにしている。

【0022】また、ゲーム画像形成手段26は、フィールドの一部がモニタ5画面に表示されるような大小関係で、フィールド画像の表示を行っており、従って、フィールド上でプレイキャラクタ44が移動する際に必要に応じて(プレイキャラクタ44の移動位置の画面中央からの距離に応じて適宜)プレイキャラクタ44の移動する方向と逆方向に画面を1マス目分ずつ移動(スクロール)させる表示制御を行う。例えば、図3と図4との関係ではフィールド画像はスクロールしていないが、図5では1マス目分下方にスクロールしている。

【0023】さらに、ゲーム画像形成手段26は、画面の左上にウインドウ画面である小画面46を表示し、この小画面46内に、前記個数情報、プレイキャラクタの顔画像及びゲーム時間(分、秒)を表示するようにしている。時間管理手段27は例えば4分30秒をゲーム時間として設定し(図3参照)、内蔵タイマ271を利用してゲーム開始からの残り時間を経時してゲーム画像形成手段26を介して小画面46に表示している。

【0024】入力信号判別手段28は、十字ボタン6のいずれのスイッチがオンしたか及び十字ボタン6の隣接するいずれの2個のスイッチがオンしたかを区別可能に判別するもので、これにより8方向の方向指示を認識すると共に、第1ボタン7～セレクトボタン10のそれぞれの信号を認識するものである。

【0025】プレイキャラクタ移動処理手段29は、十字ボタン6で方向指示された状態で(あるいは指示操作に続いて)、第1ボタン7が操作されたことを受けて得られる入力信号判別手段28からの認識情報に応じて、指定方向への1マス目分の移動指示と移動方向に応じた向きのプレイキャラクタ画像44の表示を指定するものである。

【0026】地雷処理手段30は、地雷がセットされたマス目にプレイキャラクタ44が位置するように移動指示されたときに、地雷が爆発した演出(図7参照)の画像42の表示を行わせると共に、ゲームを強制終了させる処理を行うものである。

【0027】アイテム取得処理手段31は、アイテム41がセットされたマス目にプレイキャラクタ44が位置するように移動指示されたときに、該アイテム41の表示を非表示に切換えると共に、その旨の文章画像45を表示させるものである。なお、アイテムの種類には、評価に影響を与えるものや、このゲーム途中で移動を有利に進めるものがある。

【0028】一時停止処理手段32は、スタートボタン9の操作に応じて、ゲーム途中で取得アイテムを確認するためのポーズ指示及びその解除を行うものである。

【0029】マーク処理手段33は、第2ボタン8の操作に応じて、マス目に危険、安全を標記する×マーク43を表示させ、またその解除を行うものである。

【0030】穴掘り処理手段34は、プレイキャラクタ44が移動して位置することとなるマス目をめくるような処理により地雷個数の数字を出現表示させるものである。

【0031】ゴール判定手段35は、プレイキャラクタ44が地雷を避けて予め設定されているゴール位置402に到着したか否か、あるいはゴール位置402に到着する前にタイムオーバーとなったかどうかを判断するものであり、これによりゲームを終了させるものである。

【0032】評価手段36は、ゴール判定手段35の判断結果、及び地雷による強制終了を受けて、更には取得したアイテム41の種類、個数及びゴールまでの所要時間等を考慮して遊技者の能力を所定のルールに従って評価し、その結果を例えば数値などで画面に表示するようにしたものである。

【0033】ステージ管理手段37は、ゲーム開始毎に地雷及びアイテム41の設定マス目位置を無作為に、あるいは所定のルールに従って設定する処理を地雷セット手段251及びアイテムセット手段253に指示すると共に、フィールドが複数ステージ分準備されている状態においては、順次他のステージのフィールドを例えば順次難易度が上がるように前記地雷セット手段251及びアイテムセット手段253に作成指示するものである。

【0034】以下、本進路開拓ゲームの動作手順を、図3～図11を参照しながら図12～図20のフローチャートに基づいて説明する。

【0035】図12は、メインフローチャートである。ゲームが開始すると、先ずフィールドの生成処理が実行され(ステップST1)、次いでプレイキャラクタ44の行動処理が実行される(ステップST3)。続いて、地雷を踏んだか否か、すなわち地雷が設定されたマス目にプレイキャラクタ44を移動指示させたか否かが判断され(ステップST5)、地雷を踏んだのであれば、図7に示す爆発画像42のデモンストレーション処理が行われて(ステップST7)、プレイキャラクタ44に減点評価(ペナルティーなど)処理が施されて(ステップST13)、本ゲームを終了する。一方、地雷を踏んでいないのであれば、タイムオーバーか否かが判断される(ステップST9)。タイムオーバーであれば、タイムオーバーのメッセージが表示され(ステップST11)、ステップST13を経て本ゲームを終了する。

【0036】タイムオーバーでなければ、ゴール位置402に到着したか否かが判断される(ステップST15)。ゴール位置402へ到着していなければ、ステップST3にリターンし、ゴール位置402に到着したのであれば、全ステージをクリアしたか否かが判断される(ステップST17)。全ステージをクリアしていな

れば、次のステージへ行くか否かが判断され（ステップST19）、次のステージへ行くのであれば、ステップST1にリターンする。一方、全ステージを終了し、または次のステージへ行かない場合には、取得アイテムをプレイキャラクタに付与して（ステップST21）、本ゲームを終了する。

【0037】図13は、ステップST1の「フィールドの生成」処理を示すサブルーチンである。まず、フィールドを白紙の状態、すなわち地雷及びアイテム41が何ら設定されていない状態にリセットする（ステップST31）。次いで、フィールドを囲むように四方に壁（図3、図8の柵40参照）をセットし（ステップST33）、続いて、スタート位置401及びゴール位置402の各マス目位置情報、すなわち座標をセットする（ステップST35）。この後、地雷のセット処理を行う（ステップST37）。そして、スタート位置401からゴール位置402まで到達可能かどうかを判断する（ステップST39）。すなわち、例えば極端な例で示すと、ゴールに到着する直前のマス目に地雷が設定されている状態では、100%ゴールに到着し得ないので、かかるフィールドが作成されていないことを判断する。ゴールまで到着可能でなければ、ステップST31にリターンしてフィールドの設定がやり直される。一方、ゴールに到着可能であれば、アイテム41のセット処理を行って（ステップST41）、本フローを抜ける。

【0038】図14は、ステップST37の「地雷のセット」処理を示すサブルーチンである。まず、地雷をセットする座標すなわちマス目を乱数で仮決定し（ステップST51）、この座標が既に地雷がセットされた座標か否かを判断する（ステップST53）。既にセットされた座標であれば、ステップST51にリターンし、そうでなければ、スタート付近の座標か否かを判断する（ステップST55）。これは、スタート位置401に隣接するマス目に設定すると、複数の地雷がスタート位置401に隣接する全てのマス目に設定されてしまうこととなって、スタート自体ができず、ゲームとして成立しなくなる可能性があるからである。同様に、ゴール位置402の真下の座標に対しても、地雷がセットされないようにしている（ステップST57）。これは、ゴール位置402には、本実施形態においては、その真下のマス目からしか進めないようにしているからである。

【0039】地雷が既に設定されたマス目でなく、かつスタート位置401の周辺及びゴール位置402の真下を避けて設定されていると、仮決定した座標すなわちマス目に地雷が設定すなわち置かれる（ステップST59）。そして、ステージナンバーに応じた数だけ地雷セット処理が終了したか否かが判断され、まだであれば、ステップST51にリターンし、全て終了しておれば本フローを抜ける。これにより、ステージが進むにつれて、ゲームの難易度がアップし、面白味が増すこととな

る。

【0040】なお、地雷の設定が終了すると、続いて地雷が設定されていない各マス目について順次、隣接するマス目に何個の地雷が設定されているかを探索処理して求め、各マス目に対応させて記憶する。そして、これらの個数情報は、プレイキャラクタ44が位置すると、そのマス目の表示態様を変更して、すなわちマス目をめくるときの表示態様で該マス目に対応する個数情報が数字で表示される。

【0041】図15は、ステップST41の「アイテムのセット」処理を示すサブルーチンである。まず、即効アイテムの内容すなわち種別を乱数で決定し（ステップST71）、次にセットする座標すなわちマス目を乱数で仮決定する（ステップST73）。仮決定した座標に爆弾の他、既にアイテムが設定されているか否かが判断され（ステップST75）、設定されていれば、ステップST73にリターンし、何も設定されていなければ、仮決定した座標にアイテムを置くすなわちセットする（ステップST77）。次いで、即効アイテムが所定数セットされたか否かが判断され（ステップST79）、所定数に達していなければ、ステップST71にリターンし、所定数に達していれば、次に、特殊アイテムの内容すなわち種別を乱数で決定し（ステップST81）、次にセットする座標すなわちマス目を乱数で仮決定する（ステップST83）。仮決定した座標に爆弾の他、既にアイテムが設定されていないか否かが判断され（ステップST85）、設定されていれば、ステップST83にリターンし、何も設定されていなければ、仮決定した座標にアイテムを置くすなわちセットする（ステップST87）。次いで、特殊アイテムが所定数セットされたか否かが判断され（ステップST89）、所定数に達していなければ、ステップST81にリターンし、所定数に達していれば本フローを抜ける。前記即効行アイテムとは、本ゲームを有利に進めるためのアイテムで、取得した時点から効力を発揮するもので、マス目に白抜き星マークで表示される（図示せず）。ここで、ゲームを有利に進めるとは、十字ボタン6で方向指示をするだけで、すなわちプレイキャラクタ44の移動に先立って地雷が設定されているか否かが分かるような表示態様が移動1回分あるいは所定回分だけ許容される等である。一方、特殊アイテムは、マス目に星マークで表示され（図3参照）、ゲームクリア後の評価において有利に考慮されるものである。

【0042】図16は、ステップST3に示す「プレイキャラクタの行動処理」のサブルーチンである。まず、キー入力があったかどうか判断され（ステップST101）、キー入力がなければ、そのまま本フローをスルーし、そうでなければ、キーがスタートボタン9か否かが判断される（ステップST103）。スタートボタン9であれば、一時停止の開始が終了の処理が実行され

(ステップST105)、そうでなければ、キー入力をプレイキャラクタ44の行動へ変換する(ステップST107)。そして、キー入力が第2ボタン8によるマークに関する指示か(ステップST109)、移動の指示か(ステップST113)が判断される。マークに関する指示であれば、プレイキャラクタ44の位置するマス目に×マーク43のセット(表記)かその解除かの処理が実行され(ステップST111)、移動に関する指示であれば、プレイキャラクタ44の移動処理が実行される(ステップST115)。

【0043】図17は、ステップST105に示す「一時停止の開始、終了処理」のサブルーチンである。先ず、現在一時停止中か否かが判断される(ステップST121)。一時停止中であれば、それを解除するべく表示画面を通常の状態へ戻し(ステップST123)、そうでなければ、一時停止の指示と判断して一時停止画面を表示し(ステップST125)、次いで今回のゲームで取得しているアイテムの個数を表示して(ステップST127)、本フローを抜ける。これにより、ゲーム途中でアイテム取得状況を確認することができることとなる。

【0044】図18は、ステップST111に示す「×マークのセット、解除」処理のサブルーチンである。先ず、プレイキャラクタ44の向く方向に何があるかを調べる(ステップST131)。そして、調べたものが、柵40であるか(ステップST133)、ゴール位置402であるか(ステップST135)、通過済みのマス目、すなわち通過済みフラグが立っているか(ステップST137)、通常のすなわち未通過のマス目であるか(ステップST139)、マーク済みのマス目、すなわちマーク済みフラグが立っているか(ステップST143)が判断される。

【0045】判断結果が、柵40である場合、ゴール位置402である場合、通過済みのマス目である場合には、本フローを抜ける。一方、通常のマス目である場合には、指先マーク47が表示され(図10参照)、プレイキャラクタ44が向いている方向の隣接マス目に×マーク43を表記する(ステップST141)。また、マーク済みのマス目である場合には、消しゴムマーク48が表示され(図11)、プレイキャラクタ44が向いている方向の隣接マス目に表記されている×マーク43を消去する(ステップST145)。この×マーク43により、該マス目が危険(地雷有り)とか安全とかの標識が立てられ、また不要になれば消去できるのでゲーム進行上有益である。

【0046】図19は、ステップST115に示す「プレイキャラクタの移動」処理のサブルーチンである。先ず、プレイキャラクタ44の向く方向に何があるかを調べる(ステップST151)。そして、調べたものが、柵40であるか(ステップST153)、マーク済みの

マス目であるか(ステップST155)、ゴール位置402であるか(ステップST157)、通過済みのマス目であるか(ステップST161)、通常のすなわち未通過のマス目であるか(ステップST167)が判断される。

【0047】判断結果が、柵40である場合、マーク済みのマス目である場合には、その方向へ移動できないとして、本フローを抜ける。一方、ゴール位置402である場合には、プレイキャラクタ44のゴール時のアニメーションをリクエストし、ゴールの演出表示を行う(ステップST159)。また、通過済みのマス目である場合、プレイキャラクタ44の座標、すなわち位置するべきマス目への変更を行い(ステップST163)、次いでプレイキャラクタ44(アニメ)の表示をリクエストすなわちプレイキャラクタを当該マス目に表示する(ステップST165)。また、通常のすなわち未通過のマス目である場合、穴掘り処理すなわちマス目画像をめぐる処理を行う(ステップST169)。

【0048】図20は、ステップST169に示す「穴掘り処理」のサブルーチンである。先ず、プレイキャラクタ44の座標変換すなわちマス目変更を行う(ステップST181)。次いで、移動したマス目が地雷がセットされているマス目か否かが判断され(ステップST183)、地雷がセットされていると、爆発のアニメーション画像42を揺らして表示する動作をリクエストする(ステップST185)。一方、地雷のマス目でなければ、アイテム41がセットされているマス目か否かが判断され(ステップST187)、アイテム41がセットされているマス目であれば、アイテム取得のアニメーションをリクエストし(ステップST189)、次いでアイテム41を取得した旨のメッセージ画像45を表示し(ステップST191)、続いてアイテム41が即効アイテムか否かが判断される(ステップST193)。即効アイテムであれば、アイテムの効果が反映されるようにし(ステップST195)、一方、即効アイテムでなければ、そのままステップST197に移行する。ステップST197では、プレイキャラクタ44の移動アニメーション(移動動作)を表示し(ステップST197)、次いでプレイキャラクタ44の画像表示をリクエストして(ステップST199)、本フローを抜ける。

【0049】以上のように、本発明は、モニタ上にプレイキャラクタと碁盤状のフィールドを表示し、マス目の1または複数にゲームオーバーに関連する障害物を設定すると共に、プレイキャラクタを非表示状態にある前記障害物を避けさせながら1マス目ずつ進めて前記フィールドのスタート位置からゴール位置に到着させる進路開拓ビデオゲームであって、操作部材からの指示に応じた方向にプレイキャラクタを1マス目ずつ移動させると共に、プレイキャラクタが位置するマス目について、該マス目に隣接するマス目に前記障害物が設定されている個

数を表示させ、かつプレイキャラクタがゴール位置に到着したと判定するとゲーム評価を与えることを特徴とするプレイキャラクタの進路開拓処理プログラムを記録した可読記録媒体に関して、他のマス目と識別可能に特定のマス目を表示させ、プレイキャラクタが前記特定のマス目を經由してゴール位置に到着することで高いゲーム評価を与えるようにしたものである。これにより、障害物を避けながらも特定のマス目を經由させ、しかもあくまでゴールしないと高い評価が与えられないという複雑で難易度の高いゲームが提供可能となる。

【0050】また、少なくとも4方向に正面が向くプレイキャラクタの画像を用意し、そのいずれかのプレイキャラクタの画像をマス目内に対応させて表示させる際に、操作部材からの方向指示に応じて、移動するマス目方向に正面が向いたプレイキャラクタを採用するようにしてもよい。これにより、プレイキャラクタの画像としてその移動方向に正面が向くものが採用され、表示されるので、遊技者をして移動方向を確認が容易になる。

【0051】また、前記操作部材からの前後左右及び斜め方向の指示に回答して、プレイキャラクタを隣接する8個のマス目のいずれかに進めるようにしてもよい。これにより、プレイキャラクタが前後左右の他斜め方向も含めた8方向に移動可能になるので、より複雑なゲームが提供可能となる。

【0052】また、障害物が設定されている個数の表示を、プレイキャラクタが通過したマス目に対してゲーム終了まで継続させるようにしてもよい。これによれば、障害物が設定されている個数の表示がゲーム終了まで表示されるので、プレイキャラクタの直ぐ周囲の他、周辺の状況も常に確認が可能となり、移動方向の指示をよりの確にすることが可能となる。

【0053】また、プレイキャラクタが位置するマス目についての、該マス目に隣接するマス目に設定されている前記障害物の個数をモニタ画面の所定の位置に数字表示するようにしてもよい。これによれば、障害物の個数がプレイキャラクタとは別の位置に表示されるので、表示されたプレイキャラクタによって該マス目に表示された障害物の個数の数字が見えにくくなるといった不具合はなくなる。

【0054】また、前記フィールド画像をモニタ画面からはみ出る大きさで表示させると共に、プレイキャラクタが進む方向と逆方向にフィールド画像を1マス目ずつ移動して表示させるようにしてもよい。これによれば、前記フィールド画像がスクロール可能になり、大きな形状のフィールドの画像が表示可能となる。

【0055】また、1つの特定マス目がモニタ画面に表示されている時、他の特定マス目がモニタ画面外となるように各特定マス目の位置を設定してもよい。これによれば、モニタ画面においてアイテムなどがセットされた特定マス目が同時に2個（すなわち複数）表示されるこ

とがなくなる。

【0056】また、スタート位置とゴール位置をフィールドの対向する辺側に設けてもよい。この構成によれば、スタート位置とゴール位置をフィールドの対向する辺側に設けたので、遊技者にとってプレイキャラクタの進むべき方向の認識が容易となる。

【0057】また、ゲーム終了までの時間を設定し、残り時間をモニタ画面の一部に表示するようにしてもよい。この構成によれば、残り時間がモニタ画面の一部に表示されると共に、この残り時間が終了するとゲームが終了する。

【0058】また、障害物が設定されるマス目をゲーム開始毎に無作為に設定するようにしてもよい。この構成によれば、ゲーム開始毎に障害物は無作為にマス目に設定される。

【0059】なお、本発明は、上記実施形態のものに限定されるものではなく、以下に述べるような種々の変形態様を採用することができる。

(1) 本実施形態では障害物としての一例である地雷をめぐると即座にゲームオーバーとなるようにしたが、例えば2回までは地雷をめぐってもよいというように許容度を設けてもよい。あるいは、地雷をめぐると、残り時間が所定時間短縮されるなどの処理をしてもよく、要するに、ゲームオーバーに関連する内容であればよい。

(2) 本実施形態ではアイテムのマス目を通過するとゲーム評価が高くなるようにしているが、アイテムのマス目を通過することをゲームクリアの条件としてもよい。また、複数のアイテムが設定されている場合、アイテム取得個数によってゲーム評価が異なるようにすることも可能であり、これにより面白味が増大する。

(3) 本実施形態では基盤状のフィールドで説明したが、要するに少なくとも複数の方向、例えば4方向へ移動可能にマス目が設定されている態様を含み、マス目の形状は特に問わない。

(4) 本実施形態ではアイテムの設定マス目に星形のマークを付したが、アイテムの設定されていないマス目と区別可能乃至は容易であれば例えば他のマークでもよいし、また表示色の違いを利用したものでもよい。

【0060】

【発明の効果】請求項1、12によれば、順次隣のマス目を指定しながら、プレイキャラクタをスタート位置からゴール位置まで1マス目ずつ移動させるようにする一方、障害物を避けるようにして、あくまでゴールさせなければ評価が得られないという、複合的な頭脳ゲームとなり、面白味のあるゲーム性の高いゲームを提供できる。

【0061】請求項2、13によれば、特定のマス目を經由させるようにする一方、障害物を避けるようにしてゴールさせなければならず、より複合的で複雑な頭脳ゲームとなり、面白味のあるゲーム性の高いゲームを提供

できる。

【0062】請求項3によれば、プレイキャラクタを移動方向に応じて異なる画像を採用したので、移動方向を容易に確認できる。

【0063】請求項4によれば、プレイキャラクタを前後左右及び斜め方向に移動可能とすることで、より複雑なゲームを提供できる。

【0064】請求項5によれば、障害物が設定されている個数の表示をゲーム終了まで表示させるようにしたので、プレイキャラクタの直ぐ周囲の他、周辺の状況を常に確認ができ、移動方向の指示をよりの確にすることができる。

【0065】請求項6によれば、表示されたプレイキャラクタによって該マス目に表示された障害物の個数の数字が見えにくくなるといった不具合が解消できる。

【0066】請求項7によれば、前記フィールド画像をスクロール可能にしたので、大きな形状のフィールドの画像を表示させることが可能となり、モニタが小形の場合でも十分各マス目の内容を視認できる。

【0067】請求項8によれば、アイテムなどがセットされた特定マス目がモニタ画面に同時に2個表示されないで、他の特定マス目の探索といった点でも面白いゲームが提供できる。

【0068】請求項9によれば、スタート位置とゴール位置をフィールドの対向する辺側に設けたので、進むべき方向の認識が容易となる。

【0069】請求項10によれば、残り時間をモニタ画面の一部に表示するようにしたので遊技者は残り時間との競争でゲームを楽しむことができる。

【0070】請求項11によれば、障害物が設定されるマス目をゲーム開始毎に無作為に設定するので飽きることがない。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の一実施形態に係るビデオゲーム装置の構成を説明するための図で、(a)はその平面図、(b)はその側面図である。

【図2】図1に示すビデオゲーム装置の制御構成の一例を示すブロック図である。

【図3】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図4】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図5】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図6】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図7】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図8】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図9】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図10】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図11】モニタに表示されるゲーム画面を示す図である。

【図12】本ゲーム動作を説明するためのメインのフローチャートを示す図である。

【図13】「フィールドの生成」処理を示すサブルーチンである。

【図14】「地雷のセット」処理を示すサブルーチンである。

【図15】「アイテムのセット」処理を示すサブルーチンである。

【図16】「プレイキャラクタの行動処理」のサブルーチンである。

【図17】「一時停止の開始、終了処理」のサブルーチンである。

【図18】「×マークのセット、解除」処理のサブルーチンである。

【図19】「プレイキャラクタの移動」処理のサブルーチンである。

【図20】「穴掘り処理」のサブルーチンである。

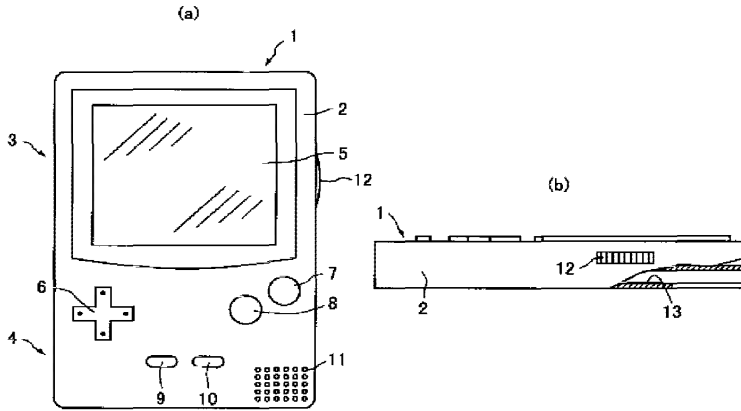
【符号の説明】

- 1 ビデオゲーム装置
- 4 操作部
- 5 モニタ
- 6 十字ボタン(操作部材)
- 7 第1ボタン(操作部材)
- 8 第2ボタン(操作部材)
- 9 スタートボタン(操作部材)
- 10 セレクトボタン(操作部材)
- 14 ROMカセット
- 141 ROM
- 142 RAM
- 20 制御部
- 21 CPU
- 25 フィールド作成手段
- 251 地雷セット手段
- 252 地雷個数管理手段
- 253 アイテムセット手段
- 26 ゲーム画像形成手段
- 27 時間管理手段
- 271 タイマ
- 28 入力信号判別手段
- 29 プレイキャラクタ移動処理手段
- 30 地雷処理手段
- 31 アイテム取得処理手段
- 32 一時停止処理手段
- 33 マーク処理手段

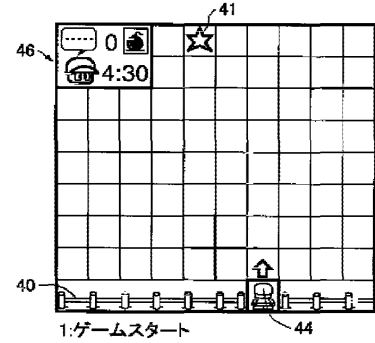
- 34 穴掘り処理手段
- 35 ゴール判定手段
- 36 評価手段
- 37 ステージ管理手段

- 401 スタート位置
- 402 ゴール位置
- 44 プレイキャラクタ
- 46 小画面

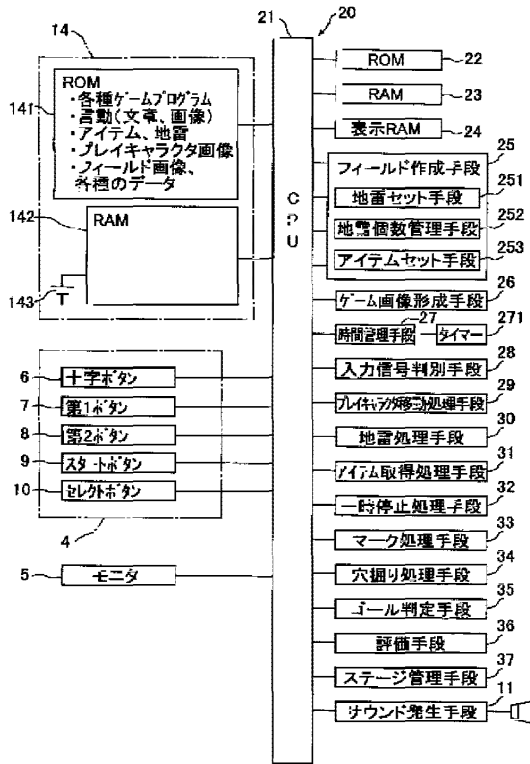
【図1】



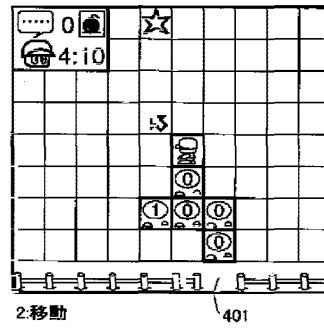
【図3】



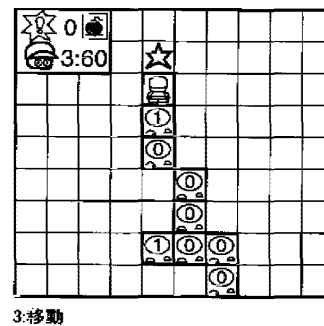
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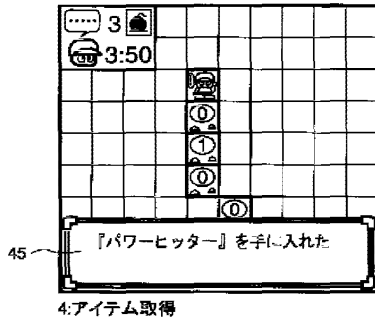
【図4】



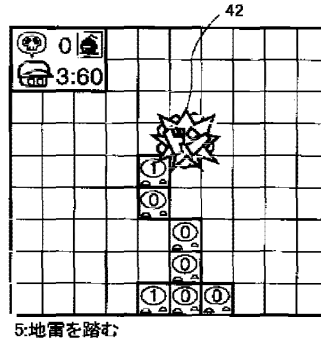
【図5】



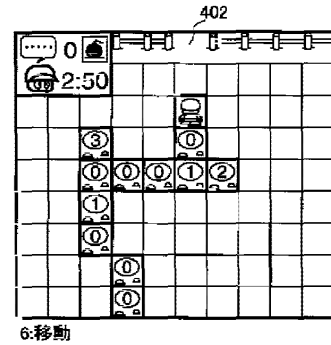
【図6】



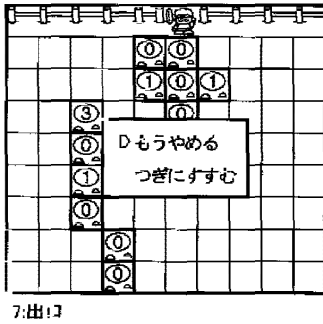
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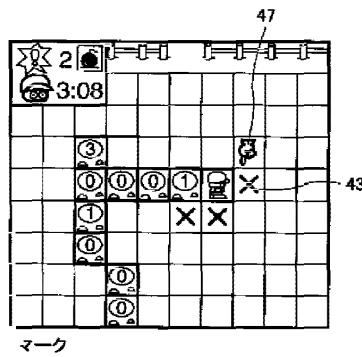
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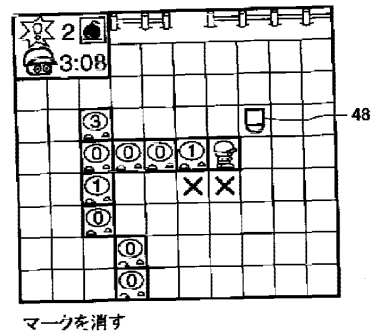
【図9】



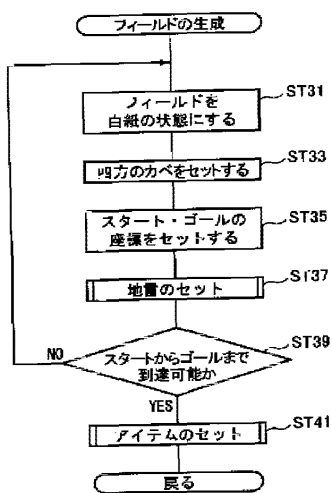
【図10】



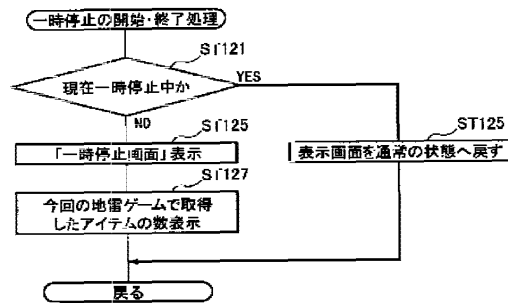
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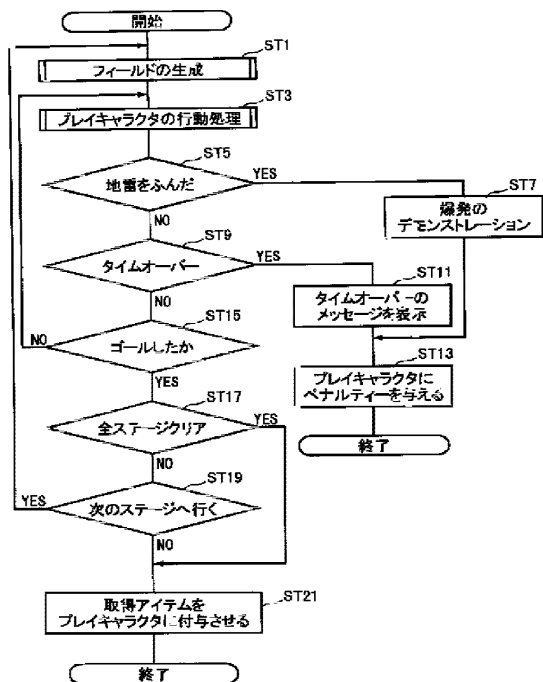
【図13】



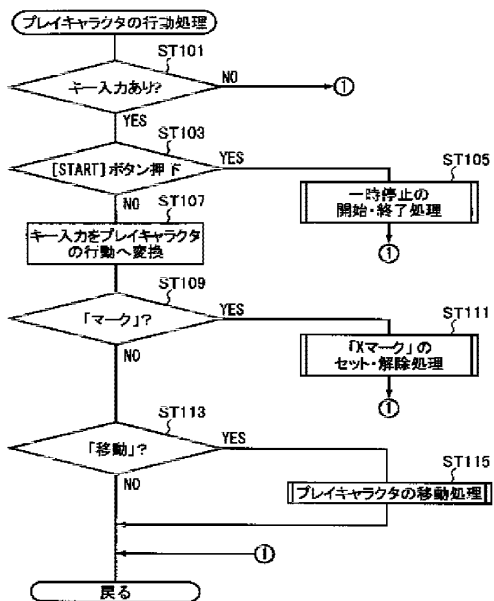
【図17】



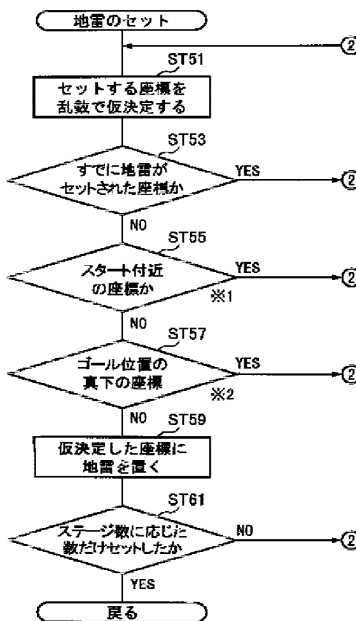
【図12】



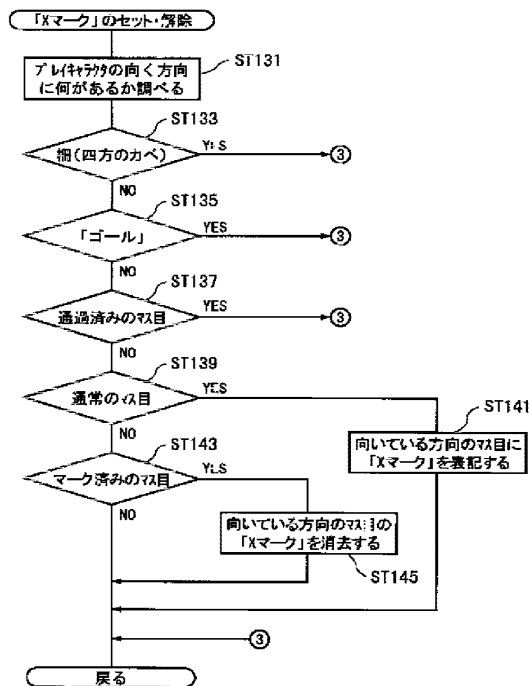
【図16】



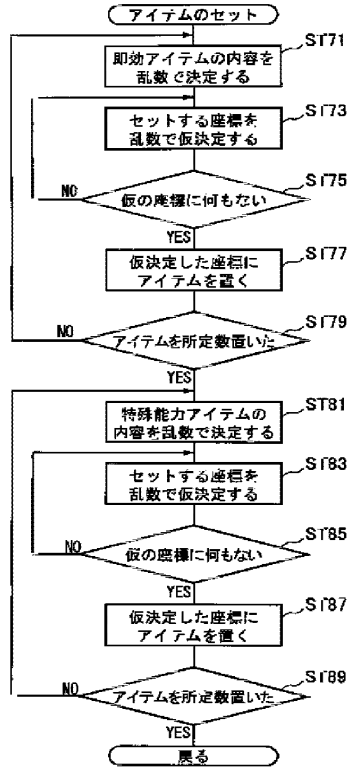
【図14】



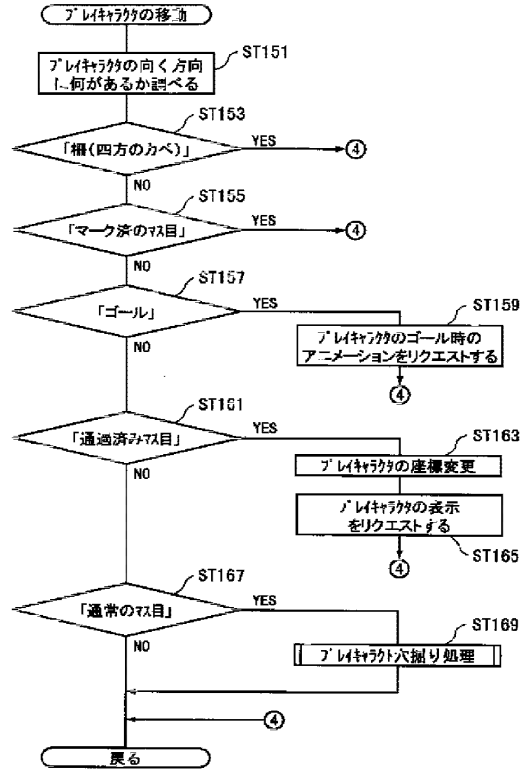
【図18】



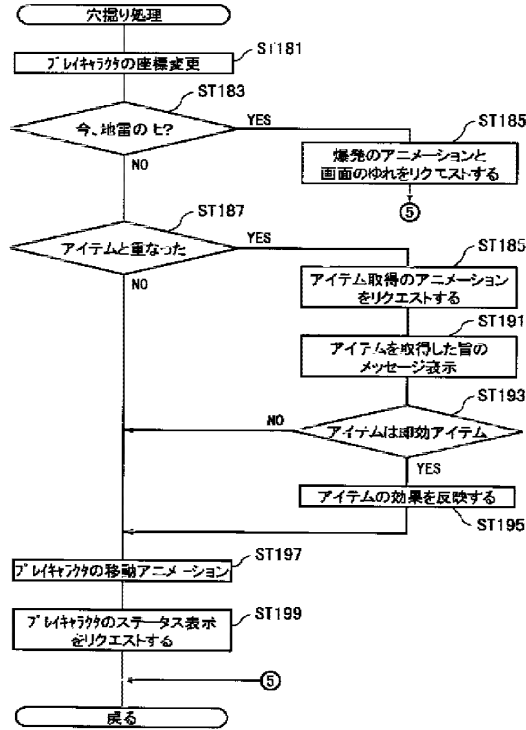
【 図 1 5 】



【 図 1 9 】



【 図 20 】



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BB07 BB08 BC00 BC01 BC05
CA01 CA06 CB01 CB05 CC03
CC08
9A001 BB02 BB03 BB04 DD12 HH18
HH26 HZ32 JJ76 KK45 KK60



Espacenet

Bibliographic data: JP2001218981 (A) — 2001-08-14

COURSE DEVELOPMENT VIDEO GAME APPARATUS AND FLEXIBLE RECORD MEDIUM HAVING COURSE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSING PROGRAM OF PLAY CHARACTER

Inventor(s): FUJIOKA KENJI; INOUE HIDETO; NISHIKAWA NAOKI; MIYAOKA KOJI ± (FUJIOKA KENJI, ; INOUE HIDETO, ; NISHIKAWA NAOKI, ; MIYAOKA KOJI)

Applicant(s): KCEO INC ± (KCEO INC)

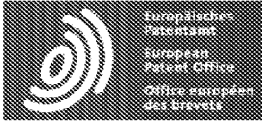
Classification: - **international:** A63F13/00; (IPC1-7): A63F13/00
- **cooperative:**

Application number: JP20000035578 20000214

Priority number (s): JP20000035578 20000214

Abstract of JP2001218981 (A)

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a compound mine game with a higher game enjoyment in which the goal is attained avoiding obstacles while clearing other targets.
SOLUTION: A mine for game over is arranged in one or a plurality of squares of a check pattern filed image displayed on a monitor 5 while a play character is moved by one square each avoiding the mine not displayed and finally reaches the goal position from the start position of the field. A cross button 6 and a first button 7 are provided to indicate the direction of moving the play character at each square, and a filed generation means 25 to numerically display the number of mines set at a square adjacent to any square where the play character is positioned while a starry mark is displayed at the square with an item set on the field and an evaluation means 36 to offer a higher game evaluation when the player character reaches the goal position via the square where are item is set are provided.



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CLAIMS JP2001218981

1.

A play character and a board-like field are displayed on the monitor, an obstacle related to the game over is set to one or a plurality of grid squares, and at the same time, the play character is set to 1 mass A progress game video game in which a player character advances one by one and arrives at a goal position from a start position of the field, comprising: moving a play character by one square in a direction according to an instruction from an operation member, A game evaluation is given when displaying the number of the obstacles set in a square adjacent to the square for the eyes and determining that the play character has arrived at the goal position A readable recording medium on which a development process program is recorded.

2.

And the specific character is displayed so as to be distinguishable from other squares, and the play character arrives at the goal position via the specific squares to give a high game evaluation. A readable recording medium storing a course development program for a play character.

3.

When preparing an image of a play character whose front faces in at least four directions and displaying an image of one of the play characters in correspondence with the inside of the squares, in accordance with the direction instruction from the operating member, 3. The program according to claim 1, wherein the play character having the front facing in the direction is adopted.

4.

Wherein the play character advances the play character to one of the eight adjacent squares in response to an instruction from the operation member in front, back, left, right, and oblique directions A readable recording medium on which a course development process program of a play character is recorded.

5.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the display of the number of obstacles set is continued until the end of the game with respect to the square through which the play character has passed A readable recording medium on which a development process program is recorded.

6.

Wherein the number of the obstacles set in the section adjacent to the square of the grid in which the play character is located is numerically displayed at a predetermined position on the monitor screen. A readable recording medium on which a course development process program for a play character described in any one of (1) to (5) is recorded.

7.

The field image is displayed in a size protruding from the monitor screen and the field image is displayed by moving the field image one square at a time in a direction opposite to the direction in which the play character advances A readable recording medium on which a course development process program of the play character described in any one of the items is recorded.

8.

8. The play according to claim 7, wherein the position of each specific square is set such that when one specific square is displayed on the monitor screen, the other specific square is outside the monitor screen A readable recording medium in which a character development course processing program is recorded.

9.

A readable recording medium storing a course development program for a play character according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the start position and the goal position are provided on opposite sides of the field.

10.

A program for developing a course of a play character according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the time until the end of the game is set and the remaining time is displayed on a part of the monitor screen Readable recording medium.

11.

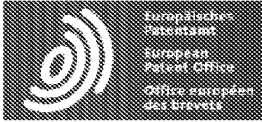
A readable recording medium storing a track development processing program for a play character according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein a grid on which an obstacle is set is randomly set at every game start.

12.

An obstacle related to game over is set to one or a plurality of grids of a checkerboard field image displayed on a monitor and at the same time an obstacle related to game over is set, And causes the field to be reached from the start position of the field to the goal position, comprising: an operation member for designating a movement direction for each first square of the play character; A number display means for displaying the number of the obstacles set in a square adjacent to the grid and evaluation means for giving a game evaluation when it is determined that the play character has reached the goal position Features a career development video game device.

13.

】 A specific grid display means for distinguishably displaying a specific grid on a field is provided and said evaluation means is adapted to give a high game evaluation when it reaches the goal position via said specific grid 13. The route game development video game apparatus according to claim 12, comprising:



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DESCRIPTION JP2001218981

[0001]

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION 1. Field of the Invention The present invention relates to a route development video game apparatus and a play character which move a play character (image) by one square on a board-shaped field image displayed on a monitor and arrive at a goal position To a readable recording medium having recorded thereon a course development processing program.

[0002]

2. Description of the Related Art Conventionally, when a bomb is set in a non-display state on a specific square of a grid-like field image displayed on a monitor and the squares indicated by the pointing member are image-wise turned, , The number of bombs set in the squares adjacent to the target is displayed and the player watches this numerical value and sets the goal of turning over all other squares while avoiding the squares set with bombs On the other hand, gaming games are known when turning over the squares on which bombs are set.

[0003]

A conventional game is a brain game that competes for how many turns of a squares other than the squares on which bombs are set are competing, and it is a positional change to the squares designated by the previous time and this time There was no requirement for continuity, so to speak, it was a random one.

As described above, there is a problem that when the game purpose is repeatedly done because it is a simple thing called a bomb hit, it gets bored.

[0004]

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION The present invention has been made in view of the above circumstances, and it is an object of the present invention to provide a route guidance video game device having a high complexity and high game potential, such as avoiding obstacles and reaching the goal while clearing other purposes, It is an object of the invention to provide a readable recording medium on which a development process program is recorded.

[0005]

A readable recording medium on which a program for developing a course of a play character according to claim 1 is recorded is characterized by displaying a play character and a checkered field on a monitor, The obstacle related to the game over is set and the play character is advanced by the first square while avoiding the obstacle in the non-display state, and arrives at the goal position from the start position of the field The play character is moved by one square in the direction according to the instruction from the operation member and the number of the obstacle set in the square adjacent to the square with respect to the square where the play character is located , And when it is determined that the play character has arrived at the goal position, giving a game evaluation It is an.

[0006]

Claim 12 sets an obstacle related to game over to one or a plurality of grids of a goat-like field image displayed on the monitor, and while avoiding the obstacle in the non-display state of the play character And a path finding video game apparatus that causes the field to pass from the start position of the field to the goal position by passing the field one by one, comprising: an operation member that designates a movement direction for each first square of the play character; a mass member A number display means for displaying the number of the obstacles set in the grid adjacent to the grid for the eye, and evaluation means for giving a game evaluation when it is determined that the play character has reached the goal position And is characterized in that it is provided.

[0007]

According to these configurations, the play character and the checkered field are displayed on

the monitor, and an obstacle related to the game over is set to one or more of the squares.

The player instructs to advance the play character by one square at a time while avoiding the obstacle in the non-display state so that the play character arrives at the goal position from the start position of the field.

In other words, the play character is moved in the direction of the direction according to the instruction from the operation member, and for the square where the play character is located, how many of the obstacles are set in the square adjacent to the square The number of what is being done is displayed.

Then, the player determines the square to be advanced by the play character while considering the number of obstacles against the surrounding grid, and repeats the operation to direct the play character to the goal position, a predetermined game evaluation is given .

[0008]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS FIG. 1 is a diagram for explaining a configuration of a video game apparatus according to one embodiment of the present invention, in which (a) is a plan view and (b) is a side view thereof. In these figures, the video game apparatus 1 is a portable type, and includes an outer case 2 in which a control unit and the like are built, a display unit 3 formed on the upper surface of the outer case 2, And an operation section 4 formed as described above.

[0009]

The display unit 3 is provided with a monitor 5 composed of a liquid crystal panel or the like capable of displaying a game image. The operation unit 4 includes a cross button 6 disposed on the left side, a first button 7 and a second button 8 arranged on the right side, and a cross button 6 and the first and second buttons 7 and 8 And a start button 9 and a select button 10 disposed at the lower side.

[0010]

A sound generating portion 11 is formed at the right corner portion of the lower surface of the outer case 2 and a sound volume adjusting portion 12 is disposed on the right side surface of the outer case 2. A ROM cassette mounting portion 13 is formed on an upper half portion of the back surface of the outer case 2.

[0011]

The monitor 5 displays an image related to the contents of the game. The cross button 6 has a cross shape and has an operating portion configured to be pushed in each direction, and each switch has a built-in switch so that it can be detected that it is pushed in. By using the cross button 6, it is possible to instruct the direction of four directions, and by operating so as to push the switches of the adjacent ones at the same time, oblique direction detection becomes possible, so that a total of eight directions can be detected. The eight directions correspond to instructing to move the play character up, down, left, right and oblique directions on the screen of the monitor 5.

[0012]

The first button 7 is for determining (confirming) a direction instruction by the cross key 6. The second button 8 displays a predetermined mark on the game screen as will be described later or instructs erasing of written marks. The start button 9 is for starting a game or instructing pause in the game, and the select button 10 designates a game type, a stage number according to need, a degree of difficulty is set for the game. If it is, it specifies the degree of difficulty.

[0013]

The sound generating section 11 is configured by incorporating a speaker inside the outer case 2 and outputs predetermined background music, sound effect, and the like in accordance with the progress of the game, and the sound volume adjusting section 12 outputs from the speaker and adjusts the volume of the background music, effect sounds, and the like. The ROM cassette mounting portion 13 detachably mounts the ROM cassette 14 (see FIG. 2), and a connector is disposed inside the ROM cassette mounting portion 13, and a connector attached to the front end portion of the ROM cassette 14 is inserted and is electrically connected to an internal

control section.

[0014]

In the video game apparatus 1 configured as described above, while grasping the left and right sides of the outer case 2 with both hands, for example, pressing the cross button 6 with the thumb of the left hand and pressing the first and second buttons 7, 8, the start button 9, and the select button 10 are appropriately selectively pressed so that the game can be executed.

[0015]

FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing an example of a control configuration of the video game apparatus 1.

As a recording medium, what is called a ROM cassette, an optical disc, a flexible disc or the like in which ROM or the like in which game data and program data are stored are housed in a plastic case, and those directly mounted on the game circuit board Including.

[0016]

In FIG. 2, the control unit 20 is operated by the operation unit 4 based on various data such as a game program stored in the ROM cassette 14 as a recording medium and various image data which is an element constituting the game And executes a game process corresponding to a command corresponding to the contents, and includes a CPU 21 for executing calculation processing, a ROM 22 for storing a control program for controlling display on the monitor 5, and the like temporarily storing processing data And a display RAM 24 having a storage capacity of at least one screen for updating and storing a frame image on the monitor 5. In the display RAM 24, for example, writing and reading are alternately repeated at a cycle of 1/60 second, so that a stable image due to the afterimage phenomenon is displayed on the monitor 5.

[0017]

Connected to the CPU 21 are the monitor 5, the cross button 6, the first and second buttons 7 and 8, the start button 9, the select button 10, and the sound generating section 11, while the ROM cassette 14 is connected There.

[0018]

The CPU 21 also includes a field creation means 25, a game image formation means 26, a time management means 27, an input signal determination means 28, a play character movement processing means 29, a land mine processing means 30, an item acquisition processing means 31, a temporary stop processing means 32, mark processing means 33, hole digging processing means 34, goal judging means 35, evaluating means 36, stage managing means 37, and the like.

[0019]

The ROM cassette 14 stores various game programs, various preset game data necessary for game progression, various images (including a fence 40 surrounding a field, a land mine, an item 41, an explosion A play character image 44 and an explanatory text image 45 as viewed from the front (see FIG. 6), the left and right (see FIGS. 4 and 10) and the back (see FIG. 5) side, the sound effect data And a backup battery 143 of the RAM 142 and the RAM 142 for storing the game situation at the time of interruption so as to be resumable from the point of interruption when the game is interrupted.

The fence 40 displayed in the vicinity of the field is partly broken to form an entrance / exit into the field, and this interrupted portion is a game start position 401 (see FIG. 4) and a goal position 402 (FIG. 8 As shown in FIG.

In the present embodiment, the start position 401 and the goal position 402 are provided on opposite sides of the field, but the present invention is not limited thereto.

[0020]

The field preparing means 25 prepares a field image formed in a checker-like game field, that is, square field consisting of a plurality of squares in each of vertical and horizontal directions, and also creates a field image associated with game over, for example, an obstacle for forcible termination Land mine setting means 251 for setting, for example, land mines to one or a plurality of grids, a land mine setting means 251 for setting a land mine to one or a plurality of grids, and eight grids adjacent to each other A land mine number managing means 252 for storing the number of squares in which land mines are set out of the land mines (five on the side of the field and three on the corner) and one or plural kinds of items are set to one or a plurality

of squares And an item setting means 253. In addition, the set land mines are prevented from being displayed on the screen. The relation of the setting positions of a plurality of items is set to a square such that other items are not displayed at the same time in a state in which a grid with one item set is displayed on the monitor screen. The land of the land mine and the set square of the item 41 are managed as the coordinates in the vertical and horizontal directions of the grid.

[0021]

The game image forming means 26 displays the field image created by the field creating means on the monitor 5 and also displays the operation contents of the cross button 6, the first and second buttons 7, 8 of the operation section 4, the game program of the ROM 141, And the contents of the RAM 142, and causes the display RAM 24 to form a predetermined display image. The game image forming means 26 keeps the number information (numeral) set in the grid at the game start point in a non-display state, and for the grid where the play character 44 is located, so to say a hole digging operation (Or turning operation) is performed, and the number information is switched to the display state. Only the current grid where the play character 44 is positioned may be displayed, but in the present embodiment, the display state is continued for the grid which has once been set to the display state, that is, the grade passed by the play character 44.

[0022]

In addition, the game image forming means 26 displays the field image in such a magnitude relationship that a part of the field is displayed on the screen of the monitor 5, and accordingly, the game image forming means 26 is required to move the play character 44 on the field (Scrolls) the screen by the first square in the direction opposite to the moving direction of the play character 44 (according to the distance from the center of the screen of the movement position of the play character 44). For example, in the relationship between FIG. 3 and FIG. 4, the field image is not scrolled, but in FIG. 5, it scrolls downward by the first square.

[0023]

Further, the game image forming means 26 displays a small screen 46 as a window screen on the upper left of the screen, displays the number information, the face image of the play character and the game time (minutes, seconds) in the small screen 46 I try to do. The time management

means 27 sets, for example, 4 minutes and 30 seconds as the game time (see FIG. 3) and uses the built-in timer 271 to elapse the remaining time from the start of the game and transmits the small screen 46 As shown in FIG.

[0024]

The input signal discrimination means 28 distinguishably discriminates which switch of the cross button 6 has been turned on and which two adjacent switches of the cross button 6 are turned on, whereby the direction of the eight directions And recognizes the respective signals of the first button 7 to the select button 10.

[0025]

The play character movement processing means 29 receives the recognition information from the input signal discrimination means 28 obtained in response to the operation of the first button 7 in a state where the direction is instructed by the cross button 6 (or following the instruction operation) , Designates the movement instruction for the first square in the specified direction and the display of the play character image 44 in the direction according to the movement direction.

[0026]

When the land mine processing means 30 is instructed to move so that the play character 44 is positioned on the square where the land mine is set, the land mine processing means 30 makes the display of the image 42 of the effect (see FIG. 7) in which the mine exploded, and at the same time, Forcibly terminating the processing.

[0027]

The item acquisition processing means 31 switches the display of the item 41 to non-display when the movement instruction is made so that the play character 44 is located on the square where the item 41 is set, and the text image 45 to that effect is displayed And displays it.

In addition, there are items that influence the evaluation and types that proceed favorably in the middle of this game.

[0028]

In response to the operation of the start button 9, the pause processing means 32 issues a pause instruction for confirming the acquired item during the game and releasing the pause instruction.

[0029]

In accordance with the operation of the second button 8, the mark processing means 33 displays the X mark 43 for marking danger and safety on the grid and releases it.

[0030]

The hole digging processing means 34 makes the number of land mines appear and display by a process of turning up the grid where the play character 44 moves and is positioned.

[0031]

The goal judging means 35 judges whether or not the play character 44 has arrived at the goal position 402 set in advance avoiding land mines or whether or not the time over has come before arriving at the goal position 402, This terminates the game.

[0032]

The evaluating means 36 receives the judgment result of the goal judging means 35 and forcibly terminated by a landmine and further judges the ability of the player in consideration of the type and number of acquired items 41 and the required time to the goal and the like The result is evaluated according to the rule, and the result is displayed on the screen by, for example, a numerical value or the like.

[0033]

The stage managing means 37 instructs the landmine setting means 251 and the item setting means 253 to perform processing for setting the position of the set grid of the land mine and the item 41 at random or each time the game is started in accordance with a predetermined rule, In the mode prepared for each stage, the fields of other stages are sequentially instructed to the landmine setting means 251 and the item setting means 253 so that the degree of difficulty is sequentially increased, for example.

[0034]

Hereinafter, the operation procedure of this course development game will be described with reference to the flowcharts of FIGS. 12 to 20 with reference to FIGS. 3 to 11.

[0035]

FIG. 12 is a main flowchart.

When the game starts, first the field generation processing is executed (step ST 1), and then the action processing of the play character 44 is executed (step ST 3).

Subsequently, it is judged whether or not a land mine has been stepped on, that is, whether or not the player has instructed to move the play character 44 to the square with the land mine set (step ST 5). If the mine is stepped on, the explosion shown in FIG. 7 Demonstration processing of the image 42 is performed (step ST 7), deduction evaluation (penalty etc.) processing is applied to the play character 44 (step ST 13), and the game is ended.

On the other hand, if it is not stepping on a mine, it is judged whether it is time over or not (step ST 9).

If the time is over, a time over message is displayed (step ST 11), and the game is ended via step ST 13.

[0036]

If it is not time over, it is judged whether or not it has arrived at the goal position 402 (step ST 15).

If it has not arrived at the goal position 402, the process returns to step ST 3, and if it has arrived at the goal position 402, it is judged whether all the stages have been cleared or not (step ST 17).

If all the stages have not been cleared, it is judged whether or not to go to the next stage (step ST19), and if it is going to the next stage, the procedure returns to step ST1.

On the other hand, if all the stages are ended or if they do not go to the next stage, an acquired item is given to the play character (step ST 21), and the game is ended.

[0037]

FIG. 13 is a subroutine showing the "field generation" process of step ST 1.

First, the field is reset to a blank state, that is, a state in which no landmines and items 41 are set (step ST 31).

Next, walls (see the fence 40 in FIG. 3 and FIG. 8) are set on all sides so as to surround the field (step ST 33), and subsequently, each grid position information, that is, coordinates of the start position 401 and the goal position 402 is set (Step ST 35). After this, the landmine is set (step ST37). Then, it is determined whether it is possible to reach the goal position 402 from the start position 401 (step ST 39). That is, for example, in an extreme example, in a mode in which mines are set in the square just before arriving at the goal, since it is not possible to arrive at a 100% goal, it is judged that such a field is not created. If it is not possible to arrive at the goal, the process returns to step ST 31 and the setting of the field is redone. On the other hand, if it is possible to arrive at the goal, the setting processing of the item 41 is performed (step ST41), and this flow exits.

[0038]

FIG. 14 is a subroutine showing the "set landmine" process of step ST 37. Firstly, coordinates for setting landmines, that is, squares are provisionally determined by random numbers (step ST 51), and it is determined whether or not the coordinates have already been set with landmines (step ST 53). If the coordinates have already been set, the process returns to step ST 51. If not, it is determined whether or not the coordinates are near the start (step ST 55). If this is set to a square adjacent to the start position 401, a plurality of landmines will be set to all the adjacent squares at the start position 401, the start itself can not be performed and the game will not be established as a game There is a possibility. Likewise, landmines are prevented from being set for the coordinates directly under the goal position 402 (step ST 57). This is because the goal position 402 is set so as to proceed only from the squares just below the goal position 402 in the

present embodiment.

[0039]

If the land mine is not already set and avoided around the start position 401 and just below the goal position 402, land mines are set or placed on the provisionally determined coordinates, that is, in the square (step ST 59) . Then, it is judged whether or not the number of landmine setting processes has been completed according to the stage number. If it is not yet completed, the process returns to step ST 51, and if it is completed, the process exits this flow. As a result, as the stage progresses, the difficulty level of the game increases and the interestingness increases.

[0040]

When setting of land mines is completed, the number of land mines on each adjacent square is sequentially searched for each square that has not been set with land mines, and it is determined corresponding to each square . Then, when the play character 44 is positioned, the number information corresponding to the square is displayed in numerical form in such a manner that the display manner of the square eye is changed, that is, in such a manner as to turn the square eye.

[0041]

FIG. 15 is a subroutine showing the "item set" process in step ST 41. First, the content of the immediate item, that is, the type is determined by a random number (step ST 71), and the coordinate to be set next, that is, the square is provisionally determined as a random number (step ST 73). It is judged whether or not an item has already been set in addition to the bomb on the provisionally determined coordinates (step ST 75). If it is set, the process returns to step ST 73, and if not set, provisionally decided Place or set items in the coordinates (step ST 77). Next, it is determined whether or not a predetermined number of quick-action items have been set (step ST 79). If the predetermined number has not been reached, the process returns to step ST 71. If the predetermined number has been reached, then the contents of the special item The type is determined by a random number (step ST 81), and the coordinates to be set next, that is, the squares are provisionally determined by a random number (step ST 83). It is judged whether or not an item has already been set in addition to the bomb on the provisionally determined coordinates (step ST 85). If it is set, the process returns to step ST 83 and if nothing is set, it

provisionally decided Place items in the coordinates, that is, set (step ST 87). Next, it is judged whether or not a predetermined number of special items are set (step ST 89). If it has not reached the predetermined number, the process returns to step ST 81, and if it has reached the predetermined number, it exits this flow. The immediate effective line item is an item for advancing the game advantageously and is effective from the point of acquisition and is displayed as a hollow star mark (not shown) in the square. Here, "advancing the game advantageously" means that only a direction indication is performed with the cross button 6, that is, a display mode in which whether or not a land mine is set prior to the movement of the play character 44 is one movement It is allowed only for a predetermined number of times. On the other hand, the special item is displayed with a star mark on the grid (see FIG. 3), which is advantageously taken into consideration in the evaluation after clearing the game.

[0042]

FIG. 16 is a subroutine of "action process of play character" shown in step ST 3. First, it is judged whether or not there is a key input (step ST 101). If there is no key input, this flow is passed through as it is. If not, it is judged whether or not the key is the start button 9 (step ST 103). If it is the start button 9, processing for starting or terminating the temporary stop is executed (step ST 105). Otherwise, the key input is converted into the action of the play character 44 (step ST 107). Then, it is determined whether the key input is an instruction relating to the mark by the second button 8 (step ST 109) and whether the key input is an instruction to move (step ST 113). If it is an instruction relating to the mark, a process of setting (notation) of the X mark 43 or canceling thereof is executed (step ST 111) in the square where the play character 44 is located, and if it is an instruction concerning movement, movement of the play character 44 Processing is executed (step ST 115).

[0043]

FIG. 17 is a subroutine of "start and end of temporary stop" shown in step ST 105. Firstly, it is judged whether or not it is currently paused (step ST 121). If it is temporarily stopped, the display screen is returned to the normal state in order to release it (step ST 123). If not, it is judged to be a temporary stop instruction and a temporary stop screen is displayed (step ST 125), then The number of items acquired in the current game is displayed (step ST 127), and this flow exits. As a result, it is possible to confirm the item acquisition status during the game.

[0044]

FIG. 18 is a subroutine of "setting and releasing X mark" processing shown in step ST 111. Firstly, what is in the direction of the play character 44 is checked (step ST 131). Then, it is determined whether the examined item is the fence 40 (step ST133), whether the goal position 402 is present (step ST135), whether the passed squares have been passed, that is, whether the passing flag has been set (step ST137) Whether it is a non-passing grid (step ST 139), it is judged whether the marked grid, that is, the marked flag is set (step ST 143).

[0045]

When the result of the determination is the fence 40, if it is the goal position 402, if it is the past squares, the flow exits this flow. On the other hand, if it is a normal square, the fingertip mark 47 is displayed (see FIG. 10), and the X mark 43 is written in the adjacent square in the direction in which the play character 44 is facing (step ST 141). If it is a marked mark, the eraser mark 48 is displayed (FIG. 11), and the x mark 43 written in the adjacent square in the direction in which the play character 44 is facing is erased (step ST 145). With this X mark 43, the mark is dangerous (with land mines) or a safe sign, and if it becomes unnecessary it can be deleted, which is beneficial for the progress of the game.

[0046]

FIG. 19 is a subroutine of "movement of play character" shown in step ST 115. First, it is checked what is in the direction of the play character 44 (step ST 151). Then, it is determined whether the examined item is a fence 40 (step ST 153), whether it is a marked mark (step ST 155), whether it is the goal position 402 (step ST 157), whether it is a past squares (Step ST 161), it is judged whether it is normal, that is, a non-passing grid (step ST 167).

[0047]

When the judgment result is the fence 40, if it is a marked squares, it is judged that it can not move in that direction, and this flow exits. On the other hand, if it is the goal position 402, the animation of the goal of the play character 44 is requested, and the effect display of the goal is performed (step ST 159). If it is a passed square, the coordinates of the play character 44, that is, the grid to be positioned is changed (step ST 163), and then the display of the play character 44

(animation) is requested, that is, the play character is classified into the corresponding square And displays it in the eyes (step ST 165). Further, in the case of a usual, that is, a non-passing grid, a hole digging process, that is, a process of turning the grid image is performed (step ST 169).

[0048]

FIG. 20 is a subroutine of "hole digging process" shown in step ST 169. First, the coordinate conversion of the play character 44, that is, the change of the squares is performed (step ST181). Next, it is judged whether or not the moved squares are the squares in which landmines are set (step ST183). If the landmine is set, an action of rocking and displaying the explosion animation image 42 is requested (step ST 185). On the other hand, if it is not a square of a land mine, it is judged whether or not the item 41 is a set cell (step ST187). If the item 41 is a set cell to which an item 41 is set, an animation acquisition request is requested (Step ST189). Next, a message image 45 indicating that the item 41 has been acquired is displayed (step ST191), and then it is judged whether or not the item 41 is an immediate item (step ST193). If it is an immediate item, the effect of the item is reflected (step ST 195). On the other hand, if it is not an immediate item, the process directly proceeds to step ST 197. In step ST197, a movement animation (movement operation) of the play character 44 is displayed (step ST197), then the display of the image of the play character 44 is requested (step ST199), and this flow exits.

[0049]

As described above, in the present invention, the play character and the checkered field are displayed on the monitor, the obstacle related to the game over is set to one or more of the squares, and the play character is in the non-display state Advancing the first character by one square while avoiding the obstacle and arriving at the goal position from the start position of the field, wherein the play character is moved one square at a time in a direction corresponding to an instruction from the operation member At the same time, if the number of the obstacles set in the grid cells adjacent to the grid is displayed for the grid where the play character is positioned and it is determined that the play character has arrived at the goal position, a game evaluation is given Regarding the readable recording medium on which the course development process program of the play character has been recorded, Scan eyes and identifiably display the specific grid, in which the play character has to provide high game evaluation that arrive at the goal position via the specific grid. By doing this, it is possible to provide a game with a high degree of complexity and difficulty that makes it possible to pass through specific squares while avoiding obstacles, and not to give a high evaluation unless the goal is to be made to the last.

[0050]

Also, when preparing an image of a play character whose front faces in at least four directions and displaying an image of one of the play characters in correspondence with the inside of the squares, the image is moved according to the direction instruction from the operation member A play character in which the front faces in the grid direction may be adopted. As a result, as the image of the play character, one in which the front faces in the movement direction is adopted and displayed, so that the player can easily confirm the moving direction with the player.

[0051]

In addition, the play character may be advanced to any one of eight adjacent squares in response to an instruction from the operation member in front, back, left, right, and oblique directions. As a result, the play character can move in eight directions including the other oblique directions of the front, back, left, right, and right, so that a more complicated game can be provided.

[0052]

Alternatively, the display of the number of obstacles set may be continued until the end of the game with respect to the square through which the play character has passed. According to this, since the display of the number of obstacles is displayed until the end of the game, it is always possible to check peripheral circumstances besides the surroundings of the play character at all times, so that the instruction of the moving direction is more accurate .

[0053]

The number of the obstacles set in the section adjacent to the section of the square where the play character is positioned may be displayed in a predetermined position on the monitor screen. According to this, since the number of obstacles is displayed at a position different from that of the play character, there is no problem such that the number of obstacles displayed on the square can not be easily seen by the displayed play character .

[0054]

In addition, the field image may be displayed in a size protruding from the monitor screen, and the field image may be moved and displayed one by one in a direction opposite to the direction in which the play character advances. According to this, the field image can be scrolled, and an image of a field having a large shape can be displayed.

[0055]

In addition, when one specific square is displayed on the monitor screen, the position of each specific square may be set so that the other specific grid is outside the monitor screen. According to this, there is no possibility that two (ie plural) specific squares with items etc. set on the monitor screen are simultaneously displayed.

[0056]

Also, the start position and the goal position may be provided on opposite sides of the field. According to this configuration, since the start position and the goal position are provided on the opposing sides of the field, it is easy for the player to recognize the direction in which the play character should move.

[0057]

Further, the time until the game is ended may be set, and the remaining time may be displayed on a part of the monitor screen. According to this configuration, the remaining time is displayed on a part of the monitor screen, and the game is ended when the remaining time ends.

[0058]

Alternatively, a grid on which an obstacle is set may be set at random at each game start. According to this configuration, the obstacle is set at random at each game start.

[0059]

It should be noted that the present invention is not limited to the above-described embodiments, and various modifications as described below can be adopted. (1) In the present embodiment, although the game is over soon as the landmine, which is an example of an obstacle, is turned over, the allowance may be set such that the landmine may be turned up to twice, for example. Alternatively, if the landmine is turned over, the remaining time may be reduced by a predetermined time, etc. In short, it may be a content related to the game over. (2) In the present embodiment, the game evaluation is set to be higher as it passes through the squares of items, but passing through the squares of the items may be used as a condition for clearing the game. In addition, when a plurality of items are set, it is possible to make the game evaluation different depending on the number of items to be acquired, thereby increasing the interestingness. (3) In the present embodiment, it is described as a checker-like field, but in brief, it includes an aspect in which grid squares are set so as to be movable in at least a plurality of directions, for example, four directions, and the shape of the grid is not particularly limited. (4) In the present embodiment, a star shaped mark is attached to the setting square of the item, but other marks may be used as long as it is distinguishable from the squares not set with the item or is easy, The difference may be used.

[0060]

According to Claims 1 and 12, while sequentially designating the next grid section, the play character is moved from the start position to the goal position one by one, while avoiding obstacles Then, it becomes a complex brain game that the evaluation can not be obtained unless it makes it to the last, and it is possible to provide a game with high interesting game characteristics.

[0061]

According to the second and thirteenth aspects, it is necessary to pass a specific square via, while avoiding obstacles so as to make it a goal, resulting in a more complex and complicated brain game, which has interesting game characteristics Can be provided.

[0062]

According to claim 3, since different images are adopted according to the moving direction of the play character, the moving direction can be easily confirmed.

[0063]

According to the fourth aspect, it is possible to provide a more complicated game by allowing the play character to move in the front-rear, right-and-left, and diagonal directions.

[0064]

According to claim 5, display of the number of obstacles set up is displayed until the end of the game, so that it is always possible to check peripheral circumstances besides the immediate surroundings of the play character, designation of the moving direction Can be made more accurate.

[0065]

According to claim 6, it is possible to solve the problem that the number of obstacles displayed on the square can not be easily seen by the displayed play character.

[0066]

According to the seventh aspect, since the field image is made scrollable, it is possible to display an image of a field having a large shape, and the content of each square can be sufficiently recognized even when the monitor is small.

[0067]

According to claim 8, since two specific squares in which items and the like are set are not simultaneously displayed on the monitor screen, it is possible to provide an interesting game in terms of searching for another specific square.

[0068]

According to the ninth aspect, since the start position and the goal position are provided on the opposite sides of the field, recognition of the direction to be advanced is facilitated.

[0069]

According to claim 10, since the remaining time is displayed on a part of the monitor screen, the player can enjoy the game in a competition with the remaining time.

[0070]

According to the eleventh aspect, since the squares on which obstacles are set are set randomly at each game start, they do not get bored.

[0071]

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0072]

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS FIG. 1 is a diagram for explaining a configuration of a video game apparatus according to an embodiment of the present invention, in which (a) is a plan view thereof and (b) is a side view thereof.

[0073]

FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing an example of a control configuration of the video game apparatus shown in FIG. 1.

[0074]

FIG. 3 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0075]

FIG. 4 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0076]

FIG. 5 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0077]

FIG. 6 is a diagram showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0078]

FIG. 7 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0079]

FIG. 8 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0080]

FIG. 9 shows a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0081]

FIG. 10 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0082]

FIG. 11 is a view showing a game screen displayed on a monitor.

[0083]

FIG. 12 is a diagram showing a main flowchart for explaining the game operation.

[0084]

FIG. 13 is a subroutine showing "generation of a field" processing.

[0085]

FIG. 14 is a subroutine showing "set landmine" processing.

[0086]

FIG. 15 is a subroutine showing a "set item" process.

[0087]

FIG. 16 is a subroutine of "action process of play character".

[0088]

FIG. 17 is a subroutine of "start and end of temporary stop".

[0089]

FIG. 18 is a subroutine of "setting and releasing X mark" processing.

[0090]

FIG. 19 is a subroutine of "movement of play character" processing.

[0091]

FIG. 20 is a subroutine of "hole digging process".

[0092]

Explanation of sign

[0093]

1 Operating unit 5 Video player 4 Operating unit 5 Monitor 6 Cross button (operating member)
7 First button (operating member) 8 Second button (operating member) 9 Start button (operating member)
10 Select button (operating member) 14 ROM cassette 141 ROM 142 RAM 20 control unit 21 CPU 25 field creating means 251 land mine setting means 252 land mine number control means 253 item setting means 26 game image forming means 27 time management means 271 timer 28 input signal judging means 29 play character movement processing means 30 mine processing means 31 item Acquisition processing means 32 pause processing means 33 mark processing means 34 hole digging processing means 35 goal judging means 36 evaluation means 37 stage management means 401 start position 402 goal position 44 play character 46 small screen

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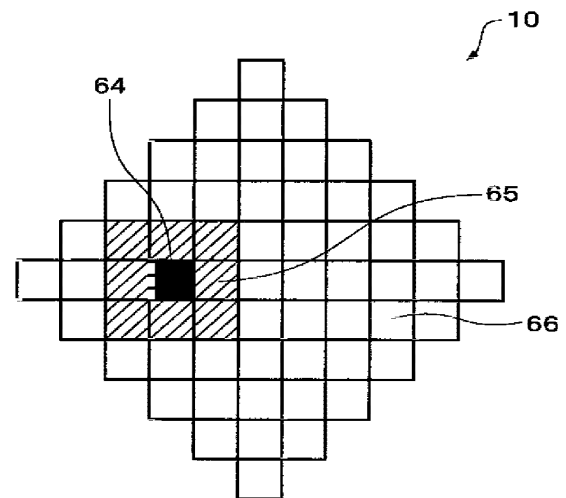
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(54) 【発明の名称】 ゲームシステム、プログラムおよび情報記憶媒体

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが操作対象を操作して取得対象を取得するゲームを実行する場合に、取得対象を取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることが可能なゲームシステム、プログラムおよび情報記憶媒体を提供すること。

【解決手段】 操作対象であるホースの中心位置と、取得対象であるカプセル10の中心位置とは異なる重心位置64との位置関係に基づいてカプセル10を取得できるかどうかを決定するようにゲームシステムを構成する。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステムにおいて、前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、前記重心位置データに基づき、前記重心位置が分かるように、前記取得対象の重心位置付近の色、透明度、模様、形のうち少なくとも1つが、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分とは異なるゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成するとともに、前記取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内であると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成する情報生成手段を有する提供手段と、を含み、前記重心位置データにおいて、前記重心位置は、前記取得対象の中心位置とは異なる位置に設定されていることを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項2】 請求項1において、前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段を含み、前記判定手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、前記情報生成手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記操作対象による当該取得対象の取得試行動作を示すゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成し、前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項3】 請求項2において、前記操作情報を出力する操作手段と、ゲーム画像を表示し、前記提供手段の一部として機能する画像表示手段とを有し、前記ゲームを実行する端末装置と、前記重心位置データと、前記ゲームを実行するためのゲームプログラムとを含む情報であって、かつ、前記端末装置を、前記記憶手段と、前記更新手段と、前記判定手段と、前記情報生成手段として機能させるための提供情報を、前記端末装置に送信し、前記提供手段の一部として機能する送受信手段を有する情報提供装置と、を含み、前記端末装置は、前記情報提供装置からの前記提供情報

に基づき、前記ゲームを実行することを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項4】 請求項2において、前記操作情報を出力する操作手段と、前記記憶手段と、前記更新手段と、前記判定手段と、前記提供手段と、を含むゲーム装置として形成されたことを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項5】 請求項1～4のいずれかにおいて、前記操作対象を示す画像は、ホースの画像であり、前記取得対象を示す画像は球状のカプセルの画像であって、前記情報生成手段は、前記操作情報が前記ホースの移動指示を示す情報である場合、前記ホースの画像を移動させるとともに移動停止時に前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項6】 請求項5において、前記判定手段は、前記ホースの画像の移動停止時に、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該カプセルを取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、前記情報生成手段は、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作と、当該カプセルが揺れる動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項7】 請求項2～6のいずれかにおいて、前記判定手段は、プレイヤーによる変更要求操作の発生イベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に成功したイベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に失敗したイベントのいずれかが該当する変更イベントが発生したかどうかを判定し、前記更新手段は、前記変更イベントが発生した場合、前記取得対象を示す取得対象データおよび前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置を示す配置データの少なくとも一方を更新し、

前記情報生成手段は、前記取得対象データおよび前記配置データの少なくとも一方に基づき、前記取得対象および前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置の少なくとも一方を変更するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするゲームシステム。

【請求項8】 ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステムにおいて、

前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、
プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、
当該判定手段によって取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内であると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供する提供手段と、
前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段と、
を含み、
前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象の重心位置を元の位置とは異なる位置に設定するために、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とするゲームシステム。
【請求項9】 ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステム用のコンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムであって、
コンピュータを、
前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、
プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、
前記重心位置データに基づき、前記重心位置が分かるように、前記取得対象の重心位置付近の色、透明度、模様、形のうち少なくとも1つが、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分とは異なるゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成するとともに、前記取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内であると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成する情報生成手段を有する提供手段として機能させ、
前記重心位置データにおいて、前記重心位置は、前記取得対象の中心位置とは異なる位置に設定されていることを特徴とするプログラム。
【請求項10】 請求項9において、
前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段としてコンピュータを機能させ、
前記判定手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、
前記情報生成手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対

象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記操作対象による当該取得対象の取得試行動作を示すゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成し、
前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とすることを特徴とするプログラム。

【請求項11】 請求項9、10のいずれかにおいて、
前記操作対象を示す画像は、ホースの画像であり、前記取得対象を示す画像は球状のカプセルの画像であって、
前記情報生成手段は、前記操作情報が前記ホースの移動指示を示す情報である場合、前記ホースの画像を移動させるとともに移動停止時に前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするプログラム。

【請求項12】 請求項11において、
前記判定手段は、前記ホースの画像の移動停止時に、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該カプセルを取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、
前記情報生成手段は、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該カプセルを取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作と、当該カプセルが揺れる動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするプログラム。

【請求項13】 請求項9～12のいずれかにおいて、
前記判定手段は、プレイヤーによる変更要求操作の発生イベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に成功したイベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に失敗したイベントのいずれかが該当する変更イベントが発生したかどうかを判定し、
前記更新手段は、前記変更イベントが発生した場合、前記取得対象を示す取得対象データおよび前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置を示す配置データの少なくとも一方を更新し、
前記情報生成手段は、前記取得対象データおよび前記配置データの少なくとも一方に基づき、前記取得対象および前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置の少なくとも一方を変更するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成することを特徴とするプログラム。

【請求項14】 ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステム用のコンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムであって、
コンピュータを、

前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、

プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、

当該判定手段によって取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供する提供手段と、

前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段として機能させ、

前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象の重心位置を元の位置とは異なる位置に設定するために、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とするプログラム。

【請求項15】 コンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムを記憶した情報記憶媒体であって、請求項9～14のいずれかのプログラムを記憶したことを特徴とする情報記憶媒体。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが操作対象を操作して取得対象を取得するゲームを実行するためのゲームシステム、プログラムおよび情報記憶媒体に関する。

【0002】

【背景技術および発明が解決しようとする課題】画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが操作対象を操作して取得対象を取得するゲームとしては、例えば、いわゆるクレーンゲームがある。

【0003】クレーンゲームの面白さは、プレイヤーが操作対象であるクレーンを操作して取得対象である景品を取得する場合に、クレーンから景品がこぼれ落ちて取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることにより、プレイヤーが景品を取得できた場合に、プレイヤーに対してより高い満足感を与えられる点にある。

【0004】このようなクレーンゲームを、ゲーム画像を用いて実現する手法として、例えば、特開2001-327749号公報に記載された手法がある。この手法では、キャラクターを2次元平面上の投影点である代表表示体で代替し、同公報の図10(A)および図10(B)に示されるように、代表表示体の中心位置と、操作表示体の中心位置との位置関係によってキャラクターを取得可能かどうかを判定している。

【0005】しかし、このような手法では、いわゆるゲ

ームセンター等に配置されているクレーンゲームの面白さをプレイヤーに感じさせることはできない。なぜなら一般的なクレーンゲームではキャラクターは傾いたり、重なったりしており、クレーンの把持部の中心位置とキャラクターの中心位置とが一致したからといってキャラクターを取得できるものではないからである。

【0006】本発明は、上記の課題に鑑みなされたものであり、その目的は、画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが操作対象を操作して取得対象を取得するゲームを実行する場合には、取得対象を取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることが可能なゲームシステム、プログラムおよび情報記憶媒体を提供することにある。

【0007】

【課題を解決するための手段】上記課題を解決するため、本発明に係るゲームシステムは、ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステムにおいて、前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、前記重心位置データに基づき、前記重心位置が分かるように、前記取得対象の重心位置付近の色、透明度、模様、形のうち少なくとも1つが、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分とは異なるゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成するとともに、前記取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内であると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成する情報生成手段を有する提供手段と、を含み、前記重心位置データにおいて、前記重心位置は、前記取得対象の中心位置とは異なる位置に設定されていることを特徴とする。

【0008】また、本発明に係るゲームシステムは、ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステムにおいて、前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データとに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、当該判定手段によって取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供する提供手段と、前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段と、を含み、前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内である

が、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象の重心位置を元の位置とは異なる位置に設定するために、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とする。

【0009】また、本発明に係るプログラムは、ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステム用のコンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムであって、コンピュータを、前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、前記重心位置データに基づき、前記重心位置が分かるように、前記取得対象の重心位置付近の色、透明度、模様、形のうち少なくとも1つが、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分とは異なるゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成するとともに、前記取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内であると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成する情報生成手段を有する提供手段として機能させ、前記重心位置データにおいて、前記重心位置は、前記取得対象の中心位置とは異なる位置に設定されていることを特徴とする。

【0010】また、本発明に係るプログラムは、ゲーム画像の一部として所定の操作対象と所定の取得対象を表示するゲームであって、プレイヤーが前記操作対象を操作して前記取得対象を取得するゲームを行うためのゲームシステム用のコンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムであって、コンピュータを、前記取得対象の重心位置を示す重心位置データを記憶する記憶手段と、プレイヤーによる前記操作対象の操作情報と、前記重心位置データに基づき、前記操作対象の所定位置と当該取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定する判定手段と、当該判定手段によって取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象をプレイヤーに対して提供する提供手段と、前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段として機能させ、前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、当該取得対象の重心位置を元の位置とは異なる位置に設定するために、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新することを特徴とする。

【0011】また、本発明に係る情報記憶媒体は、コンピュータにより読み取り可能なプログラムを記憶した情

報記憶媒体であって、上記プログラムを記憶したことを特徴とする。

【0012】本発明によれば、取得対象の重心位置に基づいて取得可能かどうかの判定を行うことにより、取得対象を取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることが可能となる。

【0013】すなわち、重心位置は、中心位置とは異なる位置にある場合もあるため、プレイヤーが操作対象の中心位置が取得対象の中心位置と一致する操作を行った場合であっても、取得対象が操作対象からこぼれ落ちて取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることにより、プレイヤーに取得対象を取得できた場合に、より高い満足感を与えることができる。

【0014】なお、前記操作対象としては、例えば、ホース、クレーン等を模した画像等が該当する。また、前記取得対象としては、例えば、カプセル、箱、キャラクター等を模した画像等が該当する。さらに、前記カプセル等を模した画像は、賞品（景品とも呼ばれる。）のアイコン画像を含み、前記提供手段は、プレイヤーが当該カプセル等を取得した場合に、前記賞品をプレイヤーに提供してもよい。

【0015】また、本発明によれば、ゲームシステム等は、重心位置が分かるように重心位置付近の色等を他の部分と異ならせることにより、プレイヤーは、視覚的に重心位置を把握することができ、取得対象を取得しやすくなる。

【0016】このようなゲーム画像としては、例えば、前記取得対象がカプセルを模した画像である場合、前記重心位置付近が半透明で、かつ、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分が透明、あるいは、前記重心位置付近が不透明で、かつ、当該重心位置付近ではない前記取得対象の部分が透明または半透明なゲーム画像等が該当する。

【0017】また、本発明によれば、ゲームシステム等は、操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが所定の距離範囲内であるかどうかを判定し、当該判定に基づいて重心位置が元の位置と変わるように重心位置データを更新することにより、同じ操作であっても、更新前には取得対象を取得可能で、更新後には取得対象を取得不可能にするといったことが可能となる。

【0018】これにより、より複雑な操作が必要とされるため、プレイヤーが取得対象を取得した場合の満足感をより高めることができる。

【0019】また、前記ゲームシステムは、前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段を含み、前記判定手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、前記情報生成手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係

にあると判定された場合、前記操作対象による当該取得対象の取得試行動作を示すゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成し、前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新してもよい。

【0020】また、前記プログラムおよび前記情報記憶媒体は、前記重心位置データを更新する更新手段としてコンピュータを機能させ、前記判定手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該取得対象を取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該取得対象を取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、前記情報生成手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記操作対象による当該取得対象の取得試行動作を示すゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成し、前記更新手段は、前記操作対象の所定位置と取得対象の重心位置とが、当該位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記重心位置データにおける当該取得対象の重心位置を更新してもよい。

【0021】これによれば、ゲームシステム等は、取得可能、取得試行可能、取得不可能という3つの場合に応じてそれぞれ異なる演出を行うことが可能となり、プレイヤーをより楽しませることができる。

【0022】また、これによれば、ゲームシステム等は、取得試行可能な位置関係にあると判定した場合、当該取得対象の重心位置を変更することができるため、プレイヤーにとっては、より複雑な操作が必要とされるため、プレイヤーが取得対象を取得した場合の満足感をより高めることができる。

【0023】すなわち、従来は、プレイヤーがもう少しで取得できる操作を行った場合であっても、取得対象の中心位置は変更されなかったため、プレイヤーが操作を微調整すれば取得対象を取得することができてしまうため、操作が単純となりプレイヤーがゲームに飽きやすかった。

【0024】これに対して、本発明によれば、ゲームシステム等は、プレイヤーがもう少しで取得できる操作を行った場合、取得対象の重心位置を変更することにより、プレイヤーが操作を微調整しただけでは取得対象を取得することができないため、操作が複雑となりプレイヤーがゲームに飽きにくく、プレイヤーに継続的にゲームを行わせることができる。

【0025】また、前記ゲームシステムは、前記操作情報を出力する操作手段と、ゲーム画像を表示し、前記提供手段の一部として機能する画像表示手段とを有し、前記ゲームを実行する端末装置と、前記重心位置データと、前記ゲームを実行するためのゲームプログラムとを含む情報であって、かつ、前記端末装置を、前記記憶手段と、前記更新手段と、前記判定手段と、前記情報生成

手段として機能させるための提供情報を、前記端末装置に送信し、前記提供手段の一部として機能する送受信手段を有する情報提供装置と、を含み、前記端末装置は、前記情報提供装置からの前記提供情報に基づき、前記ゲームを実行してもよい。

【0026】これによれば、いわゆるクライアントサーバー型のゲームシステムでゲームを実行することができる。

【0027】また、前記ゲームシステムは、前記操作情報を出力する操作手段と、前記記憶手段と、前記更新手段と、前記判定手段と、前記提供手段と、を含むゲーム装置として形成されてもよい。

【0028】これによれば、いわゆるスタンドアローン（単体）型のゲームシステムでゲームを実行することができる。

【0029】また、前記ゲームシステム、前記プログラムおよび前記情報記憶媒体において、前記操作対象を示す画像は、ホースの画像であり、前記取得対象を示す画像は球状のカプセルの画像であって、前記情報生成手段は、前記操作情報が前記ホースの移動指示を示す情報である場合、前記ホースの画像を移動させるとともに移動停止時に前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成してもよい。

【0030】これによれば、ゲームシステム等は、ホースの画像とカプセルの画像を用いて従来にはないゲームの演出を行うことができる。

【0031】また、前記ゲームシステム、前記プログラムおよび前記情報記憶媒体において、前記判定手段は、前記ホースの画像の移動停止時に、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該カプセルを取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあるかどうかを判定し、前記情報生成手段は、前記ホースの中心位置と前記カプセルの重心位置とが、当該カプセルを取得試行可能な距離範囲内であるが、当該カプセルを取得可能な距離範囲内ではない位置関係にあると判定された場合、前記ホースの吸い込み試行動作と、当該カプセルが揺れる動作を示す画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成してもよい。

【0032】これによれば、ゲームシステム等は、ホースの吸い込み試行動作に対してカプセルを揺らすという従来にはないゲームの演出を行うことができる。

【0033】また、前記ゲームシステム、前記プログラムおよび前記情報記憶媒体において、前記判定手段は、プレイヤーによる変更要求操作の発生イベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に成功したイベント、プレイヤーが複数回連続して取得対象の取得に失敗したイベントのいずれかが該当する変更イベントが発生したかどうかを判定し、前記更新手段は、前記変更イベントが発生した場合、前記取得対象を示す取得対象デー

タおよび前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置を示す配置データの少なくとも一方を更新し、前記情報生成手段は、前記取得対象データおよび前記配置データの少なくとも一方に基づき、前記取得対象および前記取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置の少なくとも一方を変更するゲーム画像を表示するためのゲーム情報を生成してもよい。

【0034】これによれば、取得対象、取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置のいずれかまたは両方を変更することができる。

【0035】これにより、プレイヤーは、ゲームに飽きにくく、継続的にゲームを行うことができる。

【0036】なお、前記変更イベントとしては、例えば、プレイヤーによる変更要求操作の発生、プレイヤーが所定回数（2回以上）連続して取得対象の取得に成功または失敗した場合等が該当する。

【0037】

【発明の実施の形態】以下、本発明を、サーバーと携帯電話を用いたゲームシステムに適用した場合を例に取り、図面を参照しつつ説明する。なお、以下に示す実施形態は、特許請求の範囲に記載された発明の内容を何ら限定するものではない。また、以下の実施形態に示す構成の全てが、特許請求の範囲に記載された発明の解決手段として必須であるとは限らない。

【0038】（ゲームシステム全体の説明）図1は、本実施形態の一例に係るゲームシステムの概略図である。

【0039】本実施形態のゲームシステムは、携帯電話200の液晶画面に表示するゲーム画像の一部として操作対象であるホースの画像と取得対象である複数のカプセルの画像を表示するとともに、プレイヤーが携帯電話200のキーを用いてホースを操作してカプセルを取得するゲームを実行する端末装置の一種である携帯電話200と、携帯電話200が当該ゲームを実行するための提供情報を提供する情報提供装置の一種であるサーバー100とを含んで構成されている。

【0040】また、サーバー100と、携帯電話200とはネットワーク300を介して接続されている。

【0041】本実施の形態のゲームは、1段目が4×4＝16個のカプセルで、2段目が3×3＝9個の合計25個のカプセルを、ホースをX方向（右方向）およびZ方向（奥行き方向）に移動させ、ホースの中心位置とカプセルの重心位置とがほぼ重なる位置関係となった場合にカプセルを取得させるゲームである。

【0042】次に、携帯電話200の画面に表示されるゲーム画像の一例を、図2を用いて説明する。

【0043】図2において、図2（A）は、X方向への移動時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図であり、図2（B）は、Z方向への移動時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図であり、図2（C）は、カプセル取得時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図である。

【0044】初期状態では、2段のカプセル10が配置

され、プレイヤーは、上段のカプセル10から取得する。

【0045】まず、プレイヤーは、図2（A）に示すように、携帯電話200のキーを操作してホース20を右に動かし、X方向において、ホース20の中心位置と、カプセル10の重心位置とが一致するようにする。

【0046】右方向への移動が終了した後、プレイヤーは、図2（B）に示すように、携帯電話200のキーを操作してホース20を奥に動かし、Z方向において、ホース20の中心位置と、カプセル10の重心位置とが一致するようにする。

【0047】このようにしてホース20の中心位置とカプセル10-21の重心位置とがほぼ重なる状態となると、ホース20は、当該カプセル10-21に向かって下降していき、図2（C）に示すように、カプセル10-21を吸い込む。

【0048】このように、本実施の形態では、重心位置を用いることにより、従来の画像を用いたクレーンゲームでは実現できなかった、取れそうで取れない感覚をプレイヤーに与えることができる。

【0049】以下、この点について説明する。

【0050】図3において、図3（A）は、従来のカーソル41の中心位置44を示す模式図であり、図3（B）は、従来の投影点51の中心位置54を示す模式図である。また、図4は、本実施形態の一例に係るカプセル10の重心位置64を示す模式図である。

【0051】従来は、外周部45で囲まれたカーソル41（ホース20に相当）の中心位置44が、中心位置54、中心位置54の周囲の中間領域55および中間領域55の周囲の外周領域56から構成される投影点51の中心位置54と一致するかどうかでキャラクター（カプセル10に相当）を取得できるかどうかを決定する方式が採用されていた。

【0052】しかし、この方式は、実際のキャラクターの重心を考慮したものではないため、プレイヤーは、キャラクターを取得できそうでできないといった感覚を感じる事ができなかった。

【0053】そこで、本実施の形態では、図4に示すように、ゲーム状況に応じてカプセル10の中心位置54とは異なる位置に重心位置64を設定し、当該重心位置64を囲む形で中間領域65を、中間領域65を囲む形で外周領域66をそれぞれ設けている。

【0054】このように、重心位置64を中心位置54とは異なる位置に設定し、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置64とに基づいて判定を行うことにより、取れそうで取れないといった感覚をプレイヤーに感じさせることが可能となる。

【0055】（機能ブロックの説明）次に、上述した機能を実現するための携帯電話200の機能ブロックについて説明する。

【0056】図5は、本実施形態の一例に係る携帯電話200の機能ブロックを示す図である。

【0057】携帯電話200は、サーバー100と情報をやり取りする送受信部290と、配信要求情報の生成等を行う処理部210と、記憶部220と、操作部230と、画像表示部260と、音声出力部262とを含んで構成されている。

【0058】なお、画像表示部260および音声出力部262は、提供手段の一部として機能する。

【0059】また、処理部210は、配信要求情報やゲーム情報を生成する情報生成部212と、ホース20とカプセル10との位置関係の判定等を行う判定部214と、記憶部220内のデータの生成や更新を行う更新部216とを含んで構成されている。

【0060】また、記憶部220は、少なくともプライズセットデータ222、カプセル配置データ224、カプセル獲得データ226およびゲームプログラム228を記憶している。

【0061】ここで、プライズセットデータ222について説明する。

【0062】図6は、本実施形態の一例に係るプライズセットデータ222のデータ構造を示す模式図である。

【0063】プライズセットデータ222は、取得対象を示す取得対象データの一種であり、画像表示部260が表示しているゲーム画像において表示されているカプセル10やカプセル10に入っている賞品(プライズ)の属性等を示すデータである。

【0064】プライズセットデータ222の項目としては、例えば、賞品を識別するための「プライズID」、当該賞品が入っているカプセル10を識別するための「プライズカプセルID」、賞品を示すアイコンを識別するための「プライズアイコンID」、カプセル10を獲得した場合にダウンロード可能となる賞品の名称を表す文字列である「プライズ名称文字列」、カプセル10を獲得した場合にプレイヤーに与えるポイントを示す「プライズポイント」、カプセル10を獲得する難易度を「A」～「E」の5段階で示す「難易度」等が該当する。

【0065】なお、「難易度」「E」が最も獲得が困難なことを示し、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置との適合性の判定が最も厳しく、「難易度」「A」が最も獲得が容易なことを示し、上記判定が最も甘い。

【0066】次に、カプセル配置データ224について説明する。

【0067】図7は、本実施形態の一例に係るカプセル配置データ224のデータ構造を示す模式図である。

【0068】カプセル配置データ224は、取得対象のゲーム空間内の配置を示す配置データの一種であり、画像表示部260が表示しているゲーム画像において表示

されているカプセル10の配置を示すデータである。上述したように、カプセル10は、最大で下段16個、上段9個の合計25個が配置される。

【0069】カプセル配置データ224の項目としては、例えば、「配置位置」、「プライズカプセルID」、カプセル10の重心位置を示す「重心」等が該当する。

【0070】なお、「配置位置」は「1」～「25」までの数値で示される。例えば、「1」が下段の最も左奥のカプセル10であり、「16」が下段の最も右手前のカプセル10であり、「17」が上段の最も左奥のカプセル10であり、「25」が上段の最も右手前のカプセル10である。

【0071】また、「重心」は「0」～「5」までの数値で示される。「重心」が「0」の場合、重心を考慮しないカプセル10であることを示す。また、「重心」が「1」の場合は重心が最も左位置にあり、「重心」が「2」の場合は重心が2番目に左位置にあり、「重心」が「3」の場合は重心が中心位置にあり、「重心」が「4」の場合は重心が2番目に右位置にあり、「重心」が「5」の場合は重心が最も右位置にあることを示す。

【0072】このように、カプセル配置データ224は、カプセル10の重心位置がカプセル10の中心位置とは異なる位置に設定可能であるように構成されている。

【0073】なお、カプセル獲得データ226は、携帯電話200の画像表示部260が表示しているカプセル10のうちどのカプセル10を獲得したかを示すデータと、最後にカプセル10の総入れ替えを行った日時を示すデータとを含む。この日時を示すデータを参照することにより、1日に1回だけ総入れ替えを行えるようにするといった制限を課すことができる。

【0074】また、ゲームプログラム228は、情報生成部212がゲーム情報を生成する際に用いるゲームを実行するためのプログラムである。

【0075】さらに、携帯電話200には情報記憶媒体280が接続され、携帯電話200は、情報記憶媒体280からプログラムを読み取って判定部214等の機能を実現することも可能に形成されている。また、携帯電話200は、ネットワークを介してホスト装置等から送信されるプログラムを読み取って判定部214等の機能を実現することも可能である。

【0076】次に、上述した機能を実現するためのサーバー100の機能ブロックについて説明する。

【0077】図8は、本実施形態の一例に係るサーバー100の機能ブロックを示す図である。

【0078】サーバー100は、ネットワーク300を介して携帯電話200から配信要求情報等を受信し、ゲームプログラム228を含む提供情報等を携帯電話200へ向け送信する提供手段の一部として機能する送受信

部190と、記憶部120と、処理部110とを含んで構成されている。

【0079】送受信部190は、配信要求情報に加え、携帯電話200でのゲーム結果を示すゲーム結果情報を受信する。

【0080】また、処理部110は、携帯電話200へ向け送信する提供情報等を生成する情報生成部112と、ゲーム結果情報に基づいてゲーム結果等を判定する判定部114と、記憶部120内のデータを更新する更新部116とを含んで構成されている。

【0081】なお、ゲームプログラム228としては、具体的には、例えば、J A V A（登録商標）言語やC言語等でプログラミングされているソフトウェア部品を適用することができる。また、ここで、J A V A（登録商標）は、米国サンマイクロシステムズ社の商標である。

【0082】また、記憶部120は、複数のプレイヤーの情報を管理するためのユーザーデータ122と、賞品（プライズ）に関する情報を含むプライズデータ124と、カプセル10に関する情報を含むカプセルデータ126と、ゲームプログラム228を含むゲームプログラム128とを記憶している。

【0083】なお、サーバー100には、情報記憶媒体180が接続され、情報記憶媒体180からプログラムを読み取ることにより、その機能を実現するように構成することも可能である。

【0084】また、サーバー100は、情報記憶媒体180からではなく、例えば、ネットワーク300を介して所定のホスト端末等からプログラムを読み取って上述した種々の機能を実現することも可能である。

【0085】ここで、サーバー100および携帯電話200の各部のハードウェア構成について説明する。

【0086】処理部110、210としては例えばCPU等、記憶部120、220としては例えばRAM等、送受信部190としては例えばルーター等、送受信部290としては例えばパケット通信モジュール、ブルートゥースモジュール等、操作部230としては例えばキー等を用いて実現できる。

【0087】また、画像表示部260としては例えば液晶パネル等、音声出力部262としては例えばスピーカ等を用いて実現できる。

【0088】なお、情報記憶媒体180、280としては、例えば、CD-ROM、DVD-ROM、ICカード、ROM、RAM、メモリカード、HDD等のレーザーや磁気等を用いた記憶媒体を適用できる。また、情報記憶媒体180、280からのプログラムの読み取り方式は、接触式でも非接触式でもよい。

【0089】（処理の流れの説明）次に、上述した各部を用いてゲームを実行する場合の処理の流れについて説明する。

【0090】図9は、本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム処

理の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【0091】ゲーム開始に先立って携帯電話200は、サーバー100に対してゲームプログラム228のダウンロード要求を示す配信要求情報を送信し、サーバー100からプライズセットデータ222、カプセル配置データ224、カプセル獲得データ226およびゲームプログラム228をダウンロードする。

【0092】携帯電話200は、画像表示部260を用いてゲームプログラム228に基づいてゲームの営業開始を示すメッセージを携帯電話200の画面に表示し、プレイヤーは、操作部230を操作してゲームを開始する。

【0093】本実施の形態では、プレイヤーは、1日に1回だけカプセル10を総入れ替え（シャッフル）できるようにゲームプログラム228を構成している。

【0094】判定部214は、操作部230からのプレイヤーによる操作情報に基づき、カプセル10とカプセル10の配置の変更要求を示し、変更イベントの一種であるシャッフル要求があるかどうかを判定する（ステップS2）。

【0095】シャッフル要求があると判定した場合、判定部214は、さらに、カプセル獲得データ226内の最後にカプセル10の総入れ替えを行った日時を示すデータに基づき、1日に1回という制限に違反していないかどうかを判定する（ステップS4）。すなわち、判定部214は、上記日時を示すデータがシャッフル要求のあった日時と同一日であれば制限違反であると判定することができる。

【0096】制限違反の場合、画像表示部260は、ゲームの営業終了を示すメッセージを画面に表示し（ステップS8）、ゲームは終了する。

【0097】一方、制限違反ではない場合、情報生成部212は、シャッフル要求を示す配信要求情報を生成し、送受信部290は、当該配信要求情報をサーバー100へ向け送信する。

【0098】サーバー100の情報生成部112は、判定部114によって当該配信要求情報がシャッフル要求であると判定された場合、プライズデータ124およびカプセルデータ126に基づき、新たなプライズセットデータ222およびカプセル配置データ224を含む提供情報を生成する。そして、送受信部190は、当該提供情報を携帯電話200へ向け送信する。

【0099】携帯電話200の送受信部290は、サーバー100から当該提供情報を受信し、更新部216は当該提供情報に基づき、プライズセットデータ222およびカプセル配置データ224を更新する。

【0100】情報生成部112は、更新されたプライズセットデータ222およびカプセル配置データ224に基づき、新たなゲーム情報を生成し、画像表示部260は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、カプセル10とカプセル

10の配置を更新したゲーム画像を表示する(ステップS6)。

【0101】このように、カプセル10自体やカプセル10の配置を変更することにより、プレイヤーは、ゲームに飽きにくく、継続的にゲームを行うことができる。

【0102】ゲームが開始されると、プレイヤーは、例えば、携帯電話200の右向き矢印キーを押し続け、ゲーム画像において左端に配置されたホース20をX方向(右方向)へ移動する(ステップS10)。

【0103】そして、プレイヤーは、例えば、携帯電話200の上向き矢印キーを押し続け、ゲーム画像において所定位置に配置されたホース20をZ方向(奥方向)へ移動する(ステップS12)。

【0104】なお、ホース20は、プレイヤーがキーを離れた時点で停止する。

【0105】判定部214は、操作部230からの操作情報に基づいてホース20の中心位置を把握し、当該中心位置を、ホース20に最も近いカプセル10の重心位置と比較する(ステップS14)。

【0106】ここで、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置との関係およびゲーム空間におけるカプセル10の配置について説明する。

【0107】図10は、本実施形態の一例に係るホース20とカプセル10の重心位置64との関係を示す模式図である。また、図11は、本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム空間の平面の模式図である。また、図12は、本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム空間の右側面の模式図である。

【0108】図10に示すように、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置64のX方向のずれ量をL1とし、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置64のZ方向のずれ量をL2とする。

【0109】判定部214は、所定の距離範囲内、例えば、L1およびL2が5ドット以内に対象となるカプセル10があるかどうかを判定し(ステップS16)、対象となるカプセル10がある場合には当該カプセル10を選択する(ステップS18)。

【0110】本実施の形態では、図11および図12に示すように、ゲーム空間において、1段目に左奥から右手前に向かって16個のカプセル10-1~10-16が配置され、2段目に左奥から右手前に向かって9個のカプセル10-17~10-25が配置されている。

【0111】また、ホース20は、平面においては、図11に示す2点鎖線で囲まれた範囲内を移動可能であり、側面においては、図12に示す2点鎖線で囲まれた範囲内を上下に移動可能である。

【0112】図11および図12に示すように、2段目のカプセル10と重なっている1段目のカプセル10は、獲得できないようになっており、プレイヤーが2段目のカプセル10を獲得することにより、2段目のカプ

セル10と重なっていない部分の1段目のカプセル10が獲得可能となる。

【0113】このように、本実施の形態では、取得対象の重なりを考慮したゲーム画像を生成している。

【0114】これにより、いわゆるゲームセンター等に配置されているクレーンゲームと同様の面白さを、プレイヤーは、携帯電話200のゲームで手軽に感じることができる。

【0115】なお、図11および図12に示す「視線」は、プレイヤーの視線であり、複数のホース20は、ホース20の可動範囲を示すものである。

【0116】上述したように、カプセル10-1~10-25は、重なっている部分もあるため、カプセル10が取得可能かどうかを判定する際に、複数のカプセル10が判定対象となる場合もある。

【0117】このため、判定部214は、L1およびL2が5ドット以内で同じ距離範囲内に複数のカプセル10が存在する場合、「ブライズカプセルID」の値が最も小さいカプセル10を選択する。もちろん、値が最も大きいカプセル10を選択してもよい。

【0118】そして、判定部214は、ブライズセットデータ222で示される当該カプセル10の「難易度」に基づき、L1およびL2に基づくホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置を比較する(ステップS20)。

【0119】例えば、カプセル10を取得可能な許容範囲を、「難易度」が「A」の場合は、5ドット四方の範囲とし、「難易度」が1つ上がるごとにドット数を1つずつ狭めていき、「難易度」が「E」の場合は、1ドット四方の範囲としてもよい。

【0120】判定部214は、ホース20の中心位置とカプセル10の重心位置の位置関係が当該許容範囲を満たしているかどうか、すなわち、カプセル10を取得可能かどうかを判定する(ステップS22)。

【0121】取得可能であると判定された場合、情報生成部212は、カプセル10の取得に成功したことを示すゲーム情報を生成し、画像表示部260は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、図2(C)に示すようなカプセル10がホース20に吸い込まれる画像と獲得した賞品を示す画像を表示し(ステップS24)、音声出力部262は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、いわゆるファンファーレ音を出力する。

【0122】また、取得可能であると判定された場合、更新部216は、どのカプセル10を取得したかを示す情報をカプセル獲得データ226に書き込み、当該カプセル10のポイントを加算するようにカプセル獲得データ226を更新する(ステップS26)。

【0123】これに対し、所定の距離範囲内にない場合(ステップS16)、情報生成部212は、カプセル10の取得に失敗したことを示すゲーム情報を生成し、画

像表示部260は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、ホース20の吸い込み試行動作を示す画像を表示し(ステップS32)、音声出力部262は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、失敗したことを示す悲しい音を出力する。

【0124】また、所定の距離範囲内であるが、カプセル10を取得可能な範囲内でない場合(ステップS22)、情報生成部212は、カプセル10の取得を試行したことを示すゲーム情報を生成し、画像表示部260は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、ホース20の吸い込み試行動作と、カプセル10が揺れる動作を示す画像を表示し(ステップS28)、音声出力部262は、当該ゲーム情報に基づき、失敗したことを示す悲しい音を出力する。

【0125】また、所定の距離範囲内であるが、カプセル10を取得可能な範囲内でない場合(ステップS22)、更新部216は、当該カプセル10の重心位置が変更されるようにカプセル配置データ224を更新する(ステップS30)。

【0126】そして、ゲームが終了した場合、送受信部290は、情報生成部212によって生成されたカプセル獲得データ226の内容を示す情報をサーバー100へ向け送信する。

【0127】サーバー100は、当該情報に基づき、カプセル獲得データ226の内容に応じて賞品であるゲーム画像やいわゆる着メロ等を携帯電話200へ向け送信する。

【0128】プレイヤーは、当該ゲーム画像等を携帯電話200で表示したり、当該着メロ等を携帯電話200で音声出力して楽しむことができる。

【0129】以上のようにしてサーバー100および携帯電話200は、複数のカプセル10からカプセル10を取得するゲームを実行する。

【0130】(その他の説明)また、本実施の形態では、図2(A)~図2(C)に示す参考画像30に矢印を表示し、矢印内の色や模様を見ることにより、プレイヤーがホース20の移動量を把握できるようになっている。

【0131】図13は、本実施形態の一例に係る矢印の表示変化を示す模式図である。

【0132】カプセル10の幅が矢印の長さに対応している。なお、奥の斜線がある2つの四角形と斜線がない2つの四角形は、4つに並んだカプセル10を模式的に表している。

【0133】例えば、図13では、斜線模様の矢印と、左半分だけ斜線模様の矢印と、模様がないう矢印が表示されている。

【0134】最初の矢印が表示されている場合、ホース20が図13の斜線で示す最も手前のカプセル10の中心位置にあることを示し、2番目の矢印が表示されている場合、ホース20が図13の斜線で示す最も手前のカ

プセル10と2番目のカプセル10との中間位置にあることを示し、3番目の矢印が表示されている場合、ホース20が2番目のカプセル10の中心位置にあることを示す。

【0135】このように、矢印の色や模様の変化でホース20とカプセル10との位置関係を示すことにより、プレイヤーは、ホース20の移動量を客観的に把握することができる。

【0136】また、賞品には以下の種類がある。

【0137】図14において、図14(A)は、ゲームプログラム部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(B)は、ゲーム画像部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(C)は、ゲーム音楽部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(D)は、ゲームポイントのアイコンを示す模式図である。

【0138】ゲーム画像では、通常のカプセル10には、図14(A)~図14(D)のいずれかのアイコンが表示される。プレイヤーは、アイコンによりカプセル10の中にどのような種類の賞品が入っているか確認することができる。

【0139】カプセル10には、通常のカプセル10とレアアイテムを含むレアカプセルと、何も入っていない外れカプセルがある。また、通常のカプセル10は、5種類の傾きがあり、傾きによって重心や表示が異なる。

【0140】図15において、図15(A)は、右に90度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(B)は、右に45度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(C)は、傾いていない通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(D)は、左に45度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(E)は、左に90度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(F)は、レアカプセルの模式図であり、図15(G)は、外れカプセルの模式図である。

【0141】図15(A)~図15(E)に示すように、図14(A)~図14(D)のいずれかのアイコンを表示するために、通常のカプセル10は、半部分が透明(半透明でもよい。)部分であり、重心位置の設定された残りの半部分が半透明(不透明でもよい。)部分となっている。

【0142】また、本実施の形態では、カプセル10の半透明部分の中心を重心に設定し、カプセル10の傾きを図15(A)~図15(E)に示す5種類に設定している。

【0143】すなわち、カプセル10の傾きによって、プレイヤーは、視覚的にカプセル10の重心を把握することができる。

【0144】また、図15(F)に示すレアカプセルは、獲得の難易度が最も高く設定されており、ポイントが高く、個数も少ない。図15(G)の外れカプセルも、プレイヤーは、アイテムやポイントを得ることは

きないが、獲得する楽しみを感じることができる。

【0145】以上のように、本実施の形態によれば、カプセル10の中心位置とは異なる位置に重心位置を設定可能とすることにより、プレイヤーは、単純にカプセル10の中心にホース20の中心を合わせるだけではカプセル10を取得することができず、カプセル10の重心位置とホース20の中心位置が適合している場合に限りてカプセル10を取得することができる。

【0146】これにより、プレイヤーに、取得対象を取れそうで取れないという感覚をプレイヤーに与えることができる。

【0147】また、本実施の形態によれば、カプセル10を取り損ねた場合に、カプセル10の重心位置を変更する。これにより、実際のカプセル10取得時の動作を模した演出を行うことができる。

【0148】このように、重心位置を変更することにより、ホース20の操作量が同じであっても、変更前にはカプセル10を取得可能であるが、変更後にはカプセル10を取得不可能にするといったことが可能となる。

【0149】これにより、より複雑な操作が必要とされるため、プレイヤーがカプセル10を取得した場合の満足度をより高めることができる。

【0150】また、本実施の形態では、プライズセットデータ222の「難易度」と、カプセル10の重心位置とホース20の中心位置との位置関係に基づき、カプセル10を取得可能、取得試行可能(取り損ね)、取得不可能という3つの状態を判定し、それぞれ異なる演出を行っている。

【0151】これにより、プレイヤーをより楽しませることができる。また、難易度が高い場合には厳しい判定を行うことにより、プレイヤーが難易度の高いカプセル10を取得した場合の満足感をより高めることができる。

【0152】(変形例)以上、本発明を適用した好適な実施の形態について説明してきたが、本発明の適用は、上述した実施例に限定されず、種々の変形が可能である。

【0153】例えば、上述した実施例では、クライアントである携帯電話200と、サーバー100とで処理を分担してゲームを実行するいわゆるクライアントサーバー方式を採用したが、単体(スタンドアロン)のゲーム装置でゲームを実行する方式を採用してもよい。

【0154】図16は、本実施形態の一例に係る業務用ゲーム装置400の外観図である。

【0155】業務用ゲーム装置400は、画面410と、複数の操作ボタン420と、コイン投入口430と、景品取り出し口440とを含んで構成されている。

【0156】このように、単体の業務用ゲーム装置400で本実施形態のゲームを実行することも可能である。

【0157】また、業務用ゲーム装置400のように、

ゲーム画像内のカプセル10をホース20で取得した場合、カプセル10に割り当てられた物理的な景品(例えば、ぬいぐるみやキャラクターグッズ等)を景品取り出し口440からプレイヤーに提供することも可能である。

【0158】なお、本実施形態のゲームを実行するためのゲームシステムを、家庭用ゲーム装置として実現してもよい。

【0159】もちろん、携帯電話200の機能や、サーバー100の機能を複数の装置に分散して処理を実行してもよい。

【0160】また、サーバー100の更新部116が、複数の携帯電話200からのカプセル獲得データ226の内容をユーザーデータ122に書き込み、カプセル取得数や獲得ポイント等を基準としたランキング等を行ってもよい。

【0161】また、上述した実施例では、ゲーム画像の一部として表示される取得対象としてカプセル10の画像を適用したが、カプセル10以外にもキャラクターやぬいぐるみ等であってもよい。

【0162】また、上述した実施例では、重心位置を視覚的に示すために、カプセル10の画像における透明度の違いで重心位置を示したが、重心位置部分の色、模様、形等が重心位置部分とは異なるようにゲーム画像を生成してもよい。

【0163】また、上述した実施例では、カプセル10の取得の際にゲーム画像とゲーム音声の両方を用いてカプセル10を揺らす動作やファンファーレ音等の演出を行ったが、ゲーム画像だけを用いたり、ゲーム音声だけを用いてもよい。

【0164】また、上述した実施例では、複数の取得対象を用いたが、1つの取得対象であってもよい。

【0165】また、同様に、上述した実施例では、ゲーム画像の一部として表示される操作対象として、ホース20の画像を適用したが、ホース20以外にもクレーン等であってもよい。もちろん、複数の操作対象を用いてもよい。

【0166】また、上述した実施例ではシャッフル要求によってカプセル10とカプセル10の配置の両方を変更したが、どちらか一方であってもよい。

【0167】また、変更イベントとしては、上述したシャッフル要求以外にも、例えば、プレイヤーが所定回数(2回以上)連続して取得対象の取得に成功または失敗した場合等を用いてもよい。

【0168】さらに、上述した実施例では、端末装置として携帯電話200を用いた例について説明したが、携帯電話200以外にも、例えば、PC(Personal Computer)、PDA(Personal Digital Assistants)、携帯型ゲーム装置、家庭用ゲーム装置、業務用ゲーム装置等の種々の端末装置を用いることも可能である。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本実施形態の一例に係るゲームシステムの概略図である。

【図2】図2(A)は、X方向への移動時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図であり、図2(B)は、Z方向への移動時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図であり、図2(C)は、カプセル取得時のゲーム画像の一例を示す図である。

【図3】図3(A)は、従来のカーソルの中心位置を示す模式図であり、図3(B)は、従来の投影点の中心位置を示す模式図である。

【図4】本実施形態の一例に係るカプセルの重心位置を示す模式図である。

【図5】本実施形態の一例に係る携帯電話の機能ブロックを示す図である。

【図6】本実施形態の一例に係るプライズセットデータのデータ構造を示す模式図である。

【図7】本実施形態の一例に係るカプセル配置データのデータ構造を示す模式図である。

【図8】本実施形態の一例に係るサーバーの機能ブロックを示す図である。

【図9】本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム処理の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【図10】本実施形態の一例に係るホースとカプセルの重心位置との関係を示す模式図である。

【図11】本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム空間の平面の模式図である。

【図12】本実施形態の一例に係るゲーム空間の右側面の模式図である。

【図13】本実施形態の一例に係る矢印の表示変化を示す模式図である。

【図14】図14(A)は、ゲームプログラム部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(B)は、ゲーム画像部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(C)は、ゲーム音楽部品のアイコンを示す模式図であり、図14(D)は、ゲームポイントのアイコンを示す模式図である。

【図15】図15(A)は、右に90度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(B)は、右に45度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(C)は、傾いていない通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(D)は、左に45度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(E)は、左に90度傾いた通常カプセルの模式図であり、図15(F)は、レアカプセルの模式図であり、図15(G)は、外れカプセルの模式図である。

【図16】本実施形態の一例に係る業務用ゲーム装置の外観図である。

【符号の説明】

- 10 カプセル(取得対象)
- 20 ホース(操作対象)
- 64 重心位置
- 100 サーバー(情報提供装置)
- 110、210 処理部
- 112、212 情報生成部(提供手段、情報生成手段)
- 114、214 判定部
- 116、216 更新部
- 120、220 記憶部
- 190、290 送受信部(提供手段)
- 122 ユーザーデータ
- 124 プライズデータ
- 126 提供データ
- 128、228 ゲームプログラム
- 180、280 情報記憶媒体
- 190、290 送受信部
- 200 携帯電話(端末装置)
- 222 プライズセットデータ(取得対象データ)
- 224 カプセル配置データ(配置データ)
- 226 カプセル獲得データ
- 400 業務用ゲーム装置
- 410 画面
- 420 操作ボタン
- 430 コイン投入口
- 440 景品取り出し口

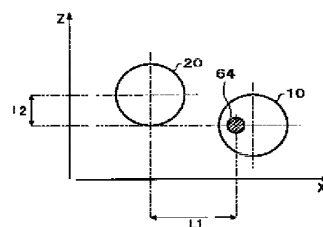
【図6】

r222						
プライズID	プライズカプセルID	プライズアイコンID	プライズ名(英文字列)	プライズポイント	難易度	...
21	41	2	...	20	C	...
0	0	0	...	0	A	...
58	1	0	...	100	E	...
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

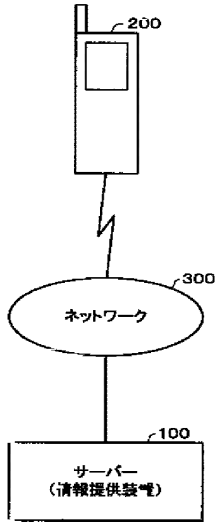
【図7】

r224			
記憶位置	プライズカプセルID	重心	...
1	41	5	...
2	0	0	...
3	1	0	...
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

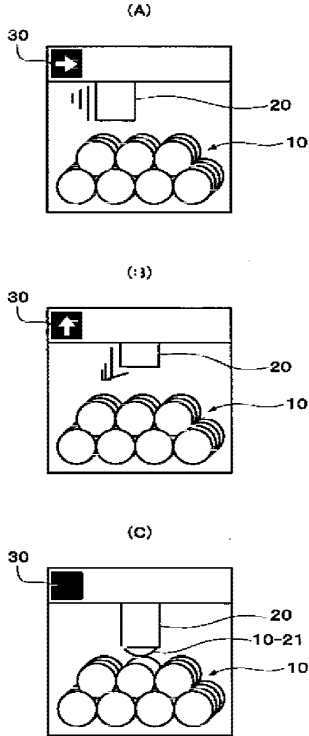
【図10】



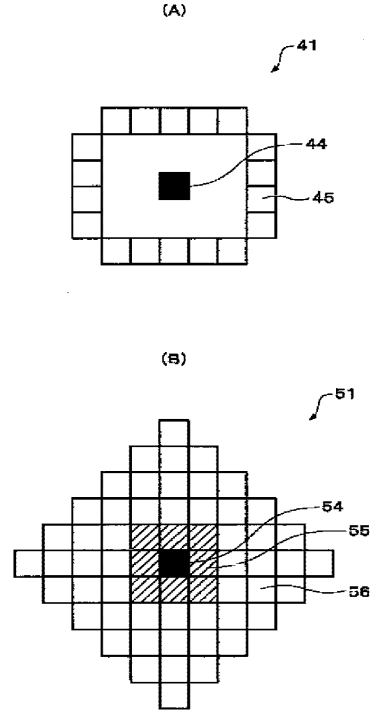
【図1】



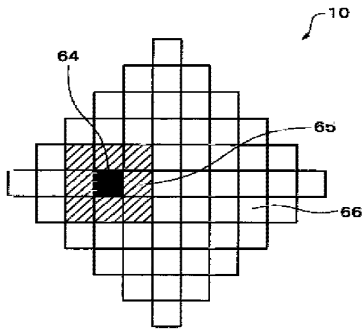
【図2】



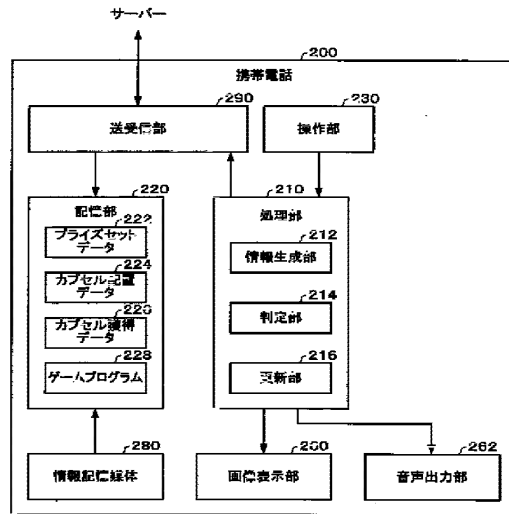
【図3】



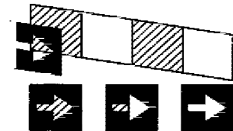
【図4】



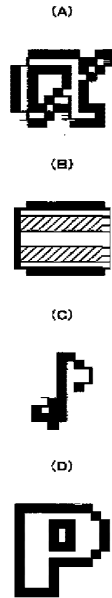
【図5】



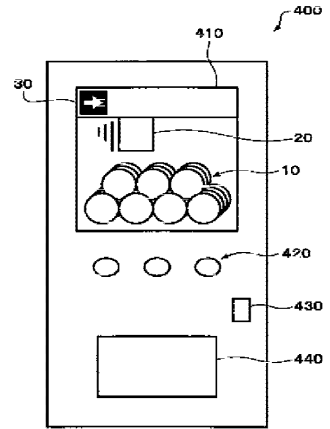
【図13】



【図14】



【図16】



フロントページの続き

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GAME SYSTEM, PROGRAM, AND INFORMATION MEMORY MEDIUM

Inventor(s): IWAMOTO TSUKASA; TAKEDA MASAKI ± (IWAMOTO TSUKASA,
; TAKEDA MASAKI)

Applicant(s): NAMCO LTD ± (NAMCO LTD)

Classification: - **international:** **A63F13/00; A63F13/10; A63F13/12; A63F9/00;**
(IPC1-7): A63F13/00; A63F13/10; A63F13/12;
A63F9/00

- **cooperative:**

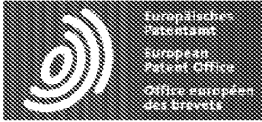
Application number: JP20030101625 20030404

Priority number (s): JP20030101625 20030404

Also published as: JP3778556 (B2)

Abstract of JP2003260266 (A)

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a game system, program and information money medium of a game for displaying a prescribed object of operation and a prescribed object of acquisition are displayed as a part of the game display, capable of making a player feel that the object of acquisition cannot be acquired as easily as it looks in executing the game for the player to acquire the object of acquisition by operating the object of operation. ;SOLUTION: In the game system, whether a capsule 10 which is the object of acquisition can be acquired or not is determined based on the physical relationship between the center of a hose which is the object of operation and the center of gravity 64, different from the center of the capsule 10, the object of acquisition. ;COPYRIGHT: (C)2003,JPO



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CLAIMS JP2003260266

1.

A game system for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image and for playing a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target, the game system A storage means for storing barycentric position data indicating a barycentric position of the manipulation target based on the operation information of the manipulation target by the player and the barycentric position data, a predetermined position of the manipulation target and a barycentric position of the object to be acquired are At least one of a color, a transparency, a pattern, and a shape in the vicinity of a position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target such that the position of the center of gravity can be known based on the barycentric position data, Generates game information for displaying a game image different from the portion to be acquired that is not in the vicinity of the center of gravity position, and acquires the acquisition target Providing means having information generating means for generating game information for displaying a game image for providing the object to be acquired to the player when it is determined that the distance is within a possible distance range; Wherein the center of gravity position is set at a position different from a center position of the acquisition target.

2.

The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an updating unit that updates the barycentric position data, wherein the judging unit judges that the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a distance range in which the acquisition target can be tried Determines whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are in the positional relationship that is not within

the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired and the information generation unit , Generates game information for displaying a game image indicating an acquisition trial operation of the acquisition subject by the operation target, and the updating unit updates the position of the operation target, the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target And when it is determined that the positional relationship is present, updates the barycentric position of the object of acquisition in the barycentric position data.

3.

The information processing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: an operation unit that outputs the operation information; a terminal device that displays the game image and that functions as a part of the providing unit and that executes the game; The information including the data and the game program for executing the game and causing the terminal device to function as the storage unit, the update unit, the determination unit, and the information generation unit An information provision device having transmitting and receiving means for transmitting the provided information of the game to the terminal device and functioning as a part of the providing means, and the terminal device performs the game based on the provided information from the information providing device And executes the game.

4.

3. The game system according to claim 2, wherein the game system is formed as a game device including an operation unit that outputs the operation information, the storage unit, the update unit, the determination unit, and the providing unit .

5.

The information processing apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the image indicating the operation object is an image of a hose, the image indicating the acquisition target is an image of a spherical capsule, Wherein said hose image generation means generates game information for displaying an image indicating a trial operation of sucking in said hose at the time of stopping movement while moving the image of said hose when it is information indicating a movement instruction of said hose.

6.

The judging means judges that the center position of the hose and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule are within a distance range in which the capsule can be tried to be acquired when the movement of the image of the hose is stopped, The information generating means determines whether the center position of the hose and the center of gravity position of the capsule are within a distance range in which the capsule can be tried to be acquired Is

determined to be in a positional relationship that is not within the distance range in which the capsule can be acquired, generating game information for displaying the hose intake trial operation and an image indicating the shaking motion of the capsule .

7.

7. The game device according to claim 2, wherein the judging means judges whether an event of occurrence of a change request operation by the player, an event in which the player succeeds in successively acquiring the acquisition target plural times, And determines whether or not a change event corresponding to any of the acquisition failed events has occurred, and in the case where the change event occurs, the update unit acquires acquisition target data indicating the acquisition target and a game space to be acquired Wherein the information generation unit updates at least one of the acquisition target data and the arrangement data indicating the arrangement in the game space based on at least one of the acquisition target data and the arrangement data, To generate a game information for displaying a game image to be changed

8.

A game system for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image and for playing a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target, the game system A storage means for storing barycentric position data indicating a barycentric position of the manipulation target based on the operation information of the manipulation target by the player and the barycentric position data, a predetermined position of the manipulation target and a barycentric position of the object to be acquired are Providing means for providing the player with the object to be acquired when it is determined that the object is within a distance range in which the object can be acquired by the determining means; An update unit configured to update the center-of-gravity position data; and a determination unit configured to determine whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are an acquisition trial In a case where it is determined that the positional relationship is within a distance range that is not within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired, in order to set the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target at a position different from the original position , And updates the center of gravity position of the acquisition subject in the barycentric position data.

9.

A game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, the game being executed by a computer for a game system for playing a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target A program which is a possible program and causes a computer to function as: storage means for

storing centroid position data indicating the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition subject; operation information on the operation subject by the player; and the center of gravity position data, A determination unit configured to determine whether or not a predetermined position and a position of a center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range based on the position of the center of gravity based on the center of gravity position data; At least one of color, transparency, pattern, and shape is a game image different from the portion to be acquired which is not near the center of gravity position Generates game information for display, and when it is determined that the acquisition target is within the distance range that can be acquired, generates game information for displaying a game image to provide the acquisition target to the player Wherein the center of gravity position is set at a position different from the center position of the acquisition target in the center of gravity position data.

10.

10. The method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of causing the computer to function as an updating means for updating the barycentric position data, wherein the judging means judges whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target satisfy the distance It is determined whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within the range but not within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired, And generates game information for displaying a game image indicating an acquisition trial operation of the acquisition target by the operation target when it is determined that the operation target is in the positional relation, and the updating unit updates the predetermined position of the operation target and the acquisition target And the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition subject in the barycentric position data is updated when it is determined that the position of the center of gravity of the object Gram.

11.

11. The information processing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the image indicating the operation target is an image of a hose, the image indicating the acquisition target is an image of a spherical capsule, Is information indicating a movement instruction of the hose, generates game information for moving the image of the hose and displaying an image showing the trial operation of suctioning the hose at the time of stopping the movement.

12.

12. The capsule medical device according to claim 11, wherein, when the movement of the image of the hose is stopped, the center position of the hose and the center of gravity position of the capsule are within a distance range in which the capsule can be tried to be acquired, , The

information generating means determines whether or not the center position of the hose and the center of gravity position of the capsule are within a distance range in which the capsule can be tried to be acquired. However, if it is determined that the capsule is in a positional relationship that is not within the distance range in which the capsule can be acquired, game information for displaying the hose intake trial operation and the image showing the shaking motion of the capsule is generated .

13.

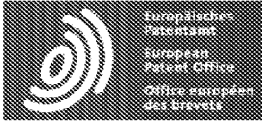
15. An information processing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said judging means judges whether an event of occurrence of a change request operation by a player, an event in which a player successively succeeded in acquiring an acquisition target a plurality of times consecutively, Whether or not a change event corresponding to any one of the events failed to be acquired is determined to have occurred, and in a case where the change event occurs, the update means updates the acquisition target data indicating the acquisition target and the acquisition target game. Wherein the information generating means updates at least one of the arrangement data indicating the layout in the space and the arrangement data indicating the arrangement in the space, and the information generating means updates, based on at least one of the acquisition target data and the arrangement data, A program characterized by generating game information for displaying a game image for changing one .

14.

A game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, the game being executed by a computer for a game system for playing a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target. A computer-readable program, comprising: storage means for storing centroid position data indicating a position of a center of gravity of an acquisition target; operation information on the operation subject by a player; and the center of gravity position data, A determination unit that determines whether or not the predetermined position of the object to be acquired and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range when the determination unit determines that the object to be acquired is within a predetermined distance range; Providing means for providing an acquisition target to a player; and updating means for updating the barycentric position data, wherein the updating means If it is determined that the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be tried to acquire but are in a positional relationship that is not within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired. And updating the center of gravity position of the acquisition subject in the barycentric position data in order to set the center of gravity position of the acquisition target to a position different from the original position in the case where the determination is made.

15.

An information storage medium storing a program readable by a computer, the information storage medium storing the program according to any one of claims 9 to 14.



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DESCRIPTION JP2003260266

[0001]

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION 1. Field of the Invention The present invention relates to a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, in which a player operates a control target to acquire an acquisition target A program, and an information storage medium.

[0002]

BACKGROUND ART As a game for displaying a predetermined operation object and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of an image and a player operates an operation target to acquire an acquisition target For example, there is a so-called crane game.

[0003]

The interestingness of a crane game is that when a player operates a crane to be operated to acquire a prize to be acquired, by giving the player a feeling that the prize can be removed from the crane and can not be removed, the player Is able to give a higher satisfaction to the player when the prize can be acquired.

[0004]

As a method of realizing such a crane game using a game image, there is a method described in, for example, JP-A-2001-327749.

In this method, the character is replaced by a representative indicator which is a projected point on the two-dimensional plane, and as shown in FIGS. 10 (A) and 10 (B) of that publication, the center position of the representative display body, It is determined whether or not a character can be acquired according to the positional relationship with the center position of the operation display body.

[0005]

However, with such a method, it is impossible for a player to feel the interestingness of a crane game that is arranged at a so-called game center or the like.

Because characters are inclined or overlapped in a general crane game, it is not possible to acquire a character just because the center position of the grip portion of the crane and the center position of the character coincide.

[0006]

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION The present invention has been made in view of the above problems, and an object thereof is to provide a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of an image, in which a player operates an operation target to acquire A program and an information storage medium capable of giving a player a sense that it is unlikely that an object to be acquired can be taken when executing a game for acquiring a target.

[0007]

In order to solve the above-mentioned problems, a game system according to the present invention is a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, A game system for playing a game in which an object to be operated is manipulated to acquire the object to be acquired, the game system comprising: storage means for storing centroid position data indicating the position of the center of gravity of the object to be acquired; operation information of the operation subject by the player; A determination unit configured to determine whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range based on the position of the center of gravity and the position of the center of gravity based on the barycentric position data , At least one of the color,

transparency, pattern, and shape in the vicinity of the center of gravity position of the acquisition target is a part of the acquisition target not near the center of gravity position Generates game information for displaying different game images and displays a game image for providing the acquisition target to the player when it is determined that the acquisition target is within the obtainable distance range Wherein the center of gravity position of the center of gravity position data is set to a position different from a center position of the acquisition target in the center of gravity position data.

[0008]

Further, a game system according to the present invention is a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, the game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target A storage unit that stores barycentric position data indicating a barycentric position of the acquisition target in the gaming system that is to be operated, a storage unit that stores barycentric position data indicating the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target, A determination unit configured to determine whether or not the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target is within a predetermined distance range; and a determination unit configured to determine whether or not the acquisition target is within the distance range that can be acquired by the determination unit, And update means for updating the center-of-gravity position data, wherein the updating means acquires a predetermined position of the operation object and a position When it is determined that the position of the center of gravity of the target is within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be tried to acquire but is not within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired, the center of gravity position The position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target in the barycentric position data is updated in order to set the position of the center of gravity of the object as a position different from the original position.

[0009]

A program according to the present invention is a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, and a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target is performed A computer readable program for a game system for a game system, comprising: storage means for storing centroid position data indicating a position of a center of gravity of the object to be acquired; operation information on the operation subject by a player; Determination means for determining whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range based on the center of gravity position data, , At least one of color, transparency, pattern, and shape in the vicinity of the center of gravity position of the acquisition target is not near the center of gravity position Generating game information for displaying a game image different from the target portion and

when it is determined that the acquisition target is within the distance range that can be acquired, acquiring a game image , Wherein the center of gravity position in the center of gravity position data is set to a position different from the center position of the acquisition target in the center of gravity position data .

[0010]

A program according to the present invention is a game for displaying a predetermined operation target and a predetermined acquisition target as a part of a game image, and a game in which a player operates the operation target to acquire the acquisition target is performed A computer readable program for a game system for a game system, comprising: storage means for storing centroid position data indicating a position of a center of gravity of the object to be acquired; operation information on the operation subject by a player; Determining means for determining whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range on the basis of the distance between the operation target and the data; Providing means for providing the object to be acquired to the player when it is determined that the object is present, an update means for updating the barycentric position data The updating means causes the predetermined position of the operation target and the center of gravity position of the acquisition target to be within a distance range in which the acquisition target can be tried to acquire but within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired , The center of gravity position of the acquisition target in the barycentric position data is updated so as to set the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target at a position different from the original position when it is determined that the position is not the position .

[0011]

An information storage medium according to the present invention is an information storage medium that stores a computer readable program, and stores the program.

[0012]

According to the present invention, it is possible to give the player a feeling that it is impossible to take an acquisition target by determining whether or not acquisition is possible based on the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target.

[0013]

That is, since the center of gravity position may be at a position different from the center position, even when the player performs an operation in which the center position of the operation target coincides with the center position of the acquisition target, even if the

acquisition target is the operation target By giving the player a feeling that the player can spill from falling and can not take it, it is possible to give a higher satisfaction when the player can acquire the acquisition target.

[0014]

As the operation target, for example, an image imitating a hose, a crane, or the like is applicable.

Further, as the acquisition target, for example, an image imitating a capsule, a box, a character, or the like corresponds.

Further, the image imitating the capsule etc. is a prize (also called a prize).

), And the providing means may provide the prize to the player when the player has acquired the capsule or the like.

[0015]

Further, according to the present invention, the game system or the like makes it possible to visually grasp the position of the center of gravity by making the color or the like in the vicinity of the position of the center of gravity different from other parts so that the position of the center of gravity can be recognized, It becomes easier to acquire acquisition targets.

[0016]

As such a game image, for example, in a case where the acquisition target is an image imitating a capsule, a portion near the center of gravity position is translucent and a portion of the acquisition target which is not near the center of gravity position is transparent, A game image which is opaque in the vicinity of the position of the center of gravity and in which the part to be acquired which is not near the position of the center of gravity is transparent or semitransparent, etc.

[0017]

Further, according to the present invention, the game system or the like judges whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the center of gravity position of the

acquisition target are within a predetermined distance range, and based on the judgment, the center of gravity position is the original position , It is possible to acquire the acquisition target before updating and to make it impossible to acquire the acquisition target after updating, even with the same operation, by updating the center of gravity position data so as to be different from the center position data.

[0018]

As a result, a more complicated operation is required, so that the satisfaction of the player acquiring the acquisition target can be further enhanced.

[0019]

In addition, the game system may include an updating unit that updates the center-of-gravity position data, and the determining unit may determine that the predetermined position of the operation target and the center of gravity position of the acquisition target are within a distance range , It is determined whether or not the positional relationship is not within the distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired, and the information generating unit determines whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target satisfy the positional relationship , Generates game information for displaying a game image showing an acquisition trial operation of the acquisition target by the operation target, and the updating unit updates the predetermined position of the operation target and the center of gravity of the acquisition target The position of the center of gravity of the object to be acquired in the center of gravity position data may be updated.

[0020]

In addition, the program and the information storage medium cause the computer to function as update means for updating the barycentric position data, and the judgment means judges whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are Whether or not it is within a distance range that can be tried to acquire but is not within a distance range in which the acquisition target can be acquired, and the information generating unit determines whether or not the predetermined position of the operation target and the center of gravity A game image for displaying a game image indicating an acquisition trial operation of the object to be acquired by the operation target, wherein the updating unit updates the operation target When it is determined that the predetermined position and the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target are in the positional relationship, the center of gravity position of the acquisition target in the barycentric position data may be updated.

[0021]

According to this, the game system or the like can make different presentations according to the three cases of acquisition possible, acquisition trial possible, and acquisition impossible, and it is possible to entertain the player more.

[0022]

Further, according to this, since it is possible for the game system or the like to change the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target when it is determined that it is in a positional relationship allowing acquisition trials, a more complicated operation is required for the player So that the satisfaction feeling when the player acquires the acquisition target can be further enhanced.

[0023]

That is, conventionally, even when the player performs an operation that can be acquired a little more, the center position of the acquisition target has not been changed, so if the player finely adjusts the operation, the acquisition target can be acquired Therefore, the operation became simple and the player was bored with the game easily.

[0024]

On the other hand, according to the present invention, the game system, etc., when the player performs operations that can be acquired a little more, by changing the position of the center of gravity of the acquisition target, by merely finely adjusting the operation by the player, Can not be acquired, the operation becomes complicated, the player is hard to get bored with the game, and the player can be made to continuously play the game.

[0025]

Further, the game system may include: an operation unit that outputs the operation information; and a terminal device that has the game display unit and has an image display unit that displays a game image and functions as a part of the providing unit, A storage unit that stores information on a position of a center of gravity of the game and a game program for executing the game and that functions as the storage unit, the update unit, the determination unit, and the information generation unit And an information providing apparatus having transmitting and receiving means for transmitting the providing information to the terminal apparatus and functioning as a part of the providing section, wherein the terminal apparatus comprises: , The game may be executed.

[0026]

According to this, it is possible to execute a game with a so-called client server type game system.

[0027]

Further, the game system may be formed as a game device including an operation unit that outputs the operation information, the storage unit, the update unit, the determination unit, and the providing unit.

[0028]

According to this, it is possible to execute a game with a so-called stand-alone type game system.

[0029]

Further, in the game system, the program and the information storage medium, the image indicating the operation target is an image of a hose, the image indicating the acquisition target is an image of a spherical capsule, the information generation unit, And when the operation information is information indicating a movement instruction of the hose, the game information generating unit may generate game information for moving the image of the hose and displaying an image indicating the trial operation of sucking in the hose at the time of movement stoppage.

[0030]

According to this, the game system or the like can perform the presentation of the game not in the past by using the image of the hose and the image of the capsule.

[0031]

Further, in the game system, the program, and the information storage medium, the determination means may determine that the center position of the hose and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule are different from each other The information generating means determines whether or not the center position of the hose and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule are within a distance range which is within the distance range but not within the distance range in which the capsule can be acquired, Is within a distance range that can be tried to be acquired but is in a positional relationship that is not within the distance range in which the capsule can be acquired, an image indicating the trial operation of suction of the hose and an action indicating that the capsule sways And generate game information for display.

[0032]

According to this, the game system or the like can perform a conventionally unexpected game of shaking the capsule against the hose suctioning trial operation.

[0033]

Also, in the game system, the program and the information storage medium, the determination means may include an occurrence event of a change request operation by the player, an event in which the player succeeds in successively acquiring the acquisition target, To determine whether or not a change event corresponding to any one of the events failed to acquire the acquisition target has occurred, and in the case where the change event occurs, the update means updates the acquisition object data indicating the acquisition target and the acquisition object data The layout data updating unit updates at least one of the arrangement data indicating the layout in the game space to be acquired and the arrangement data indicating the arrangement in the game space as the acquisition target and the information generating unit updates the layout data in the game space of the acquisition target and the acquisition target Game information for displaying a game image for changing at least one of the arrangement of Generation may be.

[0034]

According to this, one or both of the acquisition target and the arrangement within the game space of the acquisition target can be changed.

[0035]

As a result, the player is less likely to get bored with the game and can continuously play the game.

[0036]

Examples of the change event include, for example, occurrence of a change request operation by a player, a case where the player has succeeded or failed to acquire an acquisition target a predetermined number of times (two or more times in a row), and the like, and the like.

[0037]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS Hereinafter, the present invention will be described with reference to the drawings, taking as an example a case where the present invention is applied to a game system using a server and a mobile phone.

It should be noted that the following embodiments do not limit the contents of the invention described in the claims at all.

In addition, all of the configurations described in the following embodiments are not necessarily indispensable as means for solving the invention described in the claims.

[0038]

(Explanation of Overall Game System) FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a game system according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0039]

The game system of this embodiment displays images of hoses to be operated and images of a plurality of capsules to be acquired as a part of a game image to be displayed on the liquid crystal screen of the mobile phone 200, A cellular phone 200 which is a kind of a terminal device for executing a game for operating capsule by manipulating a hose using a key of a cellular phone 200 and a type of information providing device for providing the provided information for the mobile phone 200 to execute the game And a server 100 which is a server.

[0040]

In addition, the server 100 and the cellular phone 200 are connected via a network 300.

[0041]

In the game of this embodiment, a total of 25 capsules of $4 \times 4 = 16$ capsules in the first row and $3 \times 3 = 9$ in the second row are placed in the X direction (right direction) and Z And moves the capsule in the direction (depth direction) so that the capsule is acquired when the positional relationship between the center position of the hose and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule substantially overlaps.

[0042]

Next, an example of a game image displayed on the screen of the mobile phone 200 will be described with reference to FIG. 2.

[0043]

2 (A) is a diagram showing an example of a game image when moving in the X direction and FIG. 2 (B) is a diagram showing an example of a game image when moving in the Z direction FIG. 2 (C) is a diagram showing an example of a game image at the time of capsule acquisition.

[0044]

In the initial state, the two-stage capsule 10 is arranged, and the player acquires from the capsule 10 on the upper stage.

[0045]

First, as shown in FIG. 2 (A), the player moves the hose 20 to the right by operating the key of the mobile phone 200, and in the X direction, the center position of the hose 20 coincides with the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 I will do.

[0046]

After completing the movement in the right direction, the player operates the key of the mobile phone 200 to move the hose 20 backward, as shown in FIG. 2 (B), and in the Z direction, the center position of the hose 20, And the position of the center of gravity of the capsule 10 are made to coincide.

[0047]

When the center position of the hose 20 and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule 10-21 are substantially overlapped in this manner, the hose 20 descends toward the capsule 10-21, and as shown in FIG 2C , The capsule 10 - 21 is inhaled.

[0048]

As described above, in the present embodiment, by using the position of the center of gravity, it is possible to give the player a feeling that it can not be removed because it can not be achieved by a crane game using a conventional image.

[0049]

This point will be described below.

[0050]

3 (A) is a schematic diagram showing a center position 44 of a conventional cursor 41, and FIG. 3 (B) is a schematic diagram showing a center position 54 of a conventional projection point 51. FIG.

Further, FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram showing the center of gravity position 64 of the capsule 10 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0051]

Conventionally, the center position 44 of the cursor 41 (corresponding to the hose 20) surrounded by the outer peripheral portion 45 is composed of the center position 54, the intermediate region 55 around the center position 54, and the peripheral region 56 around the intermediate region 55 (Corresponding to the capsule 10) can be acquired depending on whether or not the character position matches the center position 54 of the projection point 51.

[0052]

However, since this method does not consider the center of gravity of the actual character, the player can not feel the sense that it is impossible to acquire the character.

[0053]

In view of this, in the present embodiment, as shown in FIG. 4, the center of gravity position 64 is set at a position different from the center position 54 of the capsule 10 according to the game situation, and the intermediate area 65 is surrounded by the center position 64, and an outer peripheral region 66 is provided so as to surround the intermediate region 65.

[0054]

By setting the center of gravity position 64 at a position different from the center position 54 and making a judgment based on the center position of the hose 20 and the center of gravity position 64 of the capsule 10 in this way, It makes it possible to feel it.

[0055]

(Explanation of Function Block) Next, functional blocks of the mobile phone 200 for realizing the above-described functions will be described.

[0056]

FIG. 5 is a diagram showing functional blocks of the mobile phone 200 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0057]

The mobile phone 200 includes a transmission / reception unit 290 for exchanging information with the server 100, a processing unit 210 for generating delivery request information, a storage unit 220, an operation unit 230, an image display unit 260, an audio output unit 262 As shown in FIG.

[0058]

The image display unit 260 and the sound output unit 262 function as a part of the providing unit.

[0059]

The processing unit 210 includes an information generating unit 212 for generating distribution request information and game information, a determination unit 214 for determining the positional relationship between the hose 20 and the capsule 10, and the like, generation of data in the storage unit 220 And an updating unit 216 for performing updating.

[0060]

In addition, the storage unit 220 stores at least the prize set data 222, the capsule arrangement data 224, the capsule acquisition data 226, and the game program 228.

[0061]

Here, the prize set data 222 will be described.

[0062]

FIG. 6 is a schematic diagram showing the data structure of the prize set data 222 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0063]

The prize set data 222 is one type of data to be acquired indicating the acquisition target and

includes the capsule 10 displayed in the game image displayed by the image display unit 260 and the attributes of prizes (prizes) in the capsule 10 etc. .

[0064]

Examples of the prize set data 222 include "prize ID" for identifying the prize, "prize capsule ID" for identifying the capsule 10 in which the prize is included, and an icon indicating the prize "Prize icon ID", a "prize name character string" which is a character string representing the name of the prize to be downloaded when the capsule 10 is acquired, "prize point" indicating the point given to the player when acquiring the capsule 10 , "Difficulty level" indicating the degree of difficulty of acquiring the capsule 10 in five stages "A" to "E", etc.

[0065]

"Difficulty level" "E" indicates that it is the most difficult to acquire, judgment of conformity between the center position of the hose 20 and the position of the center of gravity of the capsule 10 is the most severe, "difficulty" "A" is most acquired Is easy and the above judgment is the sweetest.

[0066]

Next, the capsule arrangement data 224 will be described.

[0067]

FIG. 7 is a schematic diagram showing the data structure of the capsule arrangement data 224 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0068]

The capsule arrangement data 224 is one type of arrangement data indicating the arrangement in the acquisition target game space and is data indicating the arrangement of the capsules 10 displayed in the game image displayed by the image display unit 260.

As described above, a total of 25 capsules 10, ie, 16 capsules in the lower stage and 9 items in the top stage are arranged at the maximum.

[0069]

For example, "arrangement position", "prize capsule ID", "center of gravity" indicating the position of the center of gravity of the capsule 10, and the like correspond to the items of the capsule arrangement data 224.

[0070]

"Arrangement position" is indicated by numerical values □ □ from "1" to "25".

For example, "1" is the capsule 10 at the leftmost back of the lower row, "16" is the capsule 10 at the bottom rightmost, "17" is the capsule 10 at the leftmost back of the upper row, "25" is the capsule 10 at the top of the right most right hand.

[0071]

"Center of gravity" is indicated by numerical values □ □ from "0" to "5".

When "center of gravity" is "0", it indicates that the capsule 10 does not consider the center of gravity.

In addition, when the "center of gravity" is "1", the center of gravity is at the leftmost position, when the "center of gravity" is "2", the center of gravity is at the second left position and when the "center of gravity" is "3" When the center of gravity is at the center position, "center of gravity" is "4", the center of gravity is the second most right position and "center of gravity" is "5", the center of gravity is at the rightmost position.

[0072]

In this manner, the capsule arrangement data 224 is configured so that the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 can be set at a position different from the center position of the capsule 10.

[0073]

It is to be noted that the capsule acquisition data 226 indicates data indicating which capsule 10 of the capsule 10 displayed by the image display unit 260 of the mobile phone 200 has been acquired and the date and time when the total capsule 10 replacement was finally performed Data.

By referring to the data indicating the date and time, it is possible to impose a restriction such that total replacement can be performed only once a day.

[0074]

The game program 228 is a program for executing a game used when the information generating unit 212 generates game information.

[0075]

Furthermore, an information storage medium 280 is connected to the mobile phone 200, and the mobile phone 200 is formed so as to be able to realize functions of the determination unit 214 etc. by reading a program from the information storage medium 280.

In addition, the mobile phone 200 can also realize functions of the determination unit 214 and the like by reading a program transmitted from a host device or the like via a network.

[0076]

Next, functional blocks of the server 100 for realizing the above-described functions will be described.

[0077]

FIG. 8 is a diagram showing functional blocks of the server 100 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0078]

The server 100 includes a transmission / reception unit 190 that functions as a part of a

providing unit that receives distribution request information and the like from the mobile phone 200 via the network 300 and transmits provided information including the game program 228 to the mobile phone 200, A storage unit 120, and a processing unit 110.

[0079]

In addition to the distribution request information, the transmission / reception unit 190 receives game result information indicating the game result on the mobile phone 200.

[0080]

In addition, the processing unit 110 includes an information generating unit 112 that generates provision information and the like to be transmitted to the cellular phone 200, a determination unit 114 that determines a game result or the like based on the game result information, and data And an updating unit 116 for updating.

[0081]

As the game program 228, specifically, for example, software components programmed in the JAVA (registered trademark) language, the C language, or the like can be applied.

Here, JAVA (registered trademark) is a trademark of Sun Microsystems, Inc. in the United States.

[0082]

The storage unit 120 also stores user data 122 for managing information on a plurality of players, prize data 124 including information on prizes (prize), capsule data 126 including information on the capsule 10, and game program 228 And a game program 128 including these programs.

[0083]

It is to be noted that the information storage medium 180 is connected to the server 100, and it is also possible to realize the function thereof by reading a program from the information storage medium 180.

[0084]

In addition, the server 100 can read the program from a predetermined host terminal or the like via the network 300, for example, not from the information storage medium 180 to realize the above-described various functions.

[0085]

Here, the hardware configuration of each part of the server 100 and the mobile phone 200 will be described.

[0086]

For example, a CPU or the like is used as the processing units 110 and 210, for example, RAM as the storage units 120 and 220, a router as the transmission / reception unit 190, a packet communication module, a Bluetooth module as the transmission / reception unit 290, For example, a key or the like.

[0087]

Further, the image display unit 260 can be realized by using, for example, a liquid crystal panel, and the sound output unit 262 can be realized by using, for example, a speaker or the like.

[0088]

As the information storage media 180 and 280, for example, a storage medium using a laser, magnetism or the like such as a CD-ROM, a DVD-ROM, an IC card, a ROM, a RAM, a memory card, an HDD, or the like can be applied.

The program reading method from the information storage medium 180, 280 may be a contact type or a non-contact type.

[0089]

(Explanation of Flow of Processing) Next, a flow of processing in the case of executing a game using each of the above units will be described.

[0090]

FIG. 9 is a flowchart showing the flow of the game process according to an example of the

present embodiment.

[0091]

Prior to the start of the game, the mobile phone 200 transmits the distribution request information indicating the download request of the game program 228 to the server 100, and the prize set data 222, the capsule arrangement data 224, the capsule acquisition data 226 and the game program 228 is downloaded.

[0092]

Using the image display unit 260, the mobile phone 200 displays a message indicating the start of game operation on the screen of the mobile phone 200 based on the game program 228, and the player operates the operation unit 230 to start the game.

[0093]

In the present embodiment, the player constitutes the game program 228 so that the capsule 10 can be replaced (shuffled) only once a day.

[0094]

Based on the operation information from the player from the operation unit 230, the determination unit 214 indicates a request to change the arrangement of the capsule 10 and the capsule 10 and determines whether there is a shuffle request as a type of change event (step S2).

[0095]

If it is determined that there is a shuffle request, the determination unit 214 further violates the restriction of once per day based on the data indicating the date and time at which the total replacement of the capsule 10 was performed at the end in the capsule acquisition data 226 (Step S4).

That is, when the data indicating the date and time is the same as the date and time at which the shuffle request was made, the determining unit 214 can determine that it is a restriction violation.

[0096]

In the case of the restriction violation, the image display unit 260 displays on the screen a message indicating the termination of the game (step S 8), and the game ends.

[0097]

On the other hand, if it is not a restriction violation, the information generating unit 212 generates distribution request information indicating a shuffle request, and the transmitting / receiving unit 290 transmits the distribution request information to the server 100.

[0098]

When the determining unit 114 determines that the distribution request information is a shuffle request, the information generating unit 112 of the server 100 generates new prize set data 222 and capsule arrangement data 224 based on the prize data 124 and the capsule data 126 And generates the provided information.

Then, the transmitting / receiving unit 190 transmits the provided information to the mobile phone 200.

[0099]

The transmitting / receiving unit 290 of the mobile phone 200 receives the provided information from the server 100, and the updating unit 216 updates the prize set data 222 and the capsule arrangement data 224 based on the provided information.

[0100]

The information generating unit 112 generates new game information based on the updated prize set data 222 and the updated capsule arrangement data 224 and the image display unit 260 updates the arrangement of the capsule 10 and the capsule 10 based on the game information (Step S 6).

[0101]

In this manner, by changing the arrangement of the capsule 10 itself or the capsule 10, the player is less likely to get bored with the game and can continuously play the game.

[0102]

When the game is started, for example, the player continues to press the rightward arrow key of the mobile phone 200 and moves the hose 20 disposed at the left end in the game image in the X direction (right direction) (step S10).

[0103]

Then, for example, the player keeps depressing the up arrow key of the mobile phone 200 and moves the hose 20 arranged at the predetermined position in the game image in the Z direction (backward direction) (step S12).

[0104]

It should be noted that the hose 20 stops when the player releases the key.

[0105]

The determination unit 214 grasps the center position of the hose 20 based on the operation information from the operation unit 230 and compares the center position with the center of gravity position of the capsule closest to the hose 20 (step S).

[0106]

Here, the relationship between the center position of the hose 20 and the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 and the arrangement of the capsule 10 in the game space will be described.

[0107]

FIG. 10 is a schematic diagram showing the relationship between the hose 20 and the center of gravity position 64 of the capsule 10 according to an example of this embodiment.

Further, FIG. 11 is a schematic diagram of a plane of a game space according to an example of the present embodiment.

Further, FIG. 12 is a schematic diagram of the right side surface of the game space according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0108]

As shown in FIG. 10, the amount of shift in the X direction between the center position of the hose 20 and the center of gravity position 64 of the capsule 10 is L 1, the amount of shift in the Z direction between the center position of the hose 20 and the center of gravity position 64 of the capsule 10 is L 2 .

[0109]

The determination unit 214 determines whether or not there is a target capsule 10 within a predetermined distance range, for example, L1 and L2 within 5 dots (step S16). If the target capsule 10 is present, the capsule 10 10 (step S18).

[0110]

In the present embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 11 and 12, in the game space, 16 capsules 10 - 1 to 10 - 16 are arranged from the left back to the right front in the first row, and the second stage , Nine capsules 10 - 17 to 10 - 25 are arranged from the left back to the right front.

[0111]

Further, in the plane, the hose 20 can move within the range surrounded by the two-dot chain line shown in FIG. 11, and on the side face, it moves up and down within the range surrounded by the two-dot chain line shown in FIG. 12 It is possible.

[0112]

As shown in FIGS. 11 and 12, the capsule 10 of the first stage overlapping the capsule 10 of the second stage can not be acquired, and by the player acquiring the capsule 10 of the second stage, It becomes possible to acquire the capsule 10 of the first stage of the portion not overlapping the capsule 10 of the second stage.

[0113]

In this way, in the present embodiment, a game image is generated in consideration of the overlap of acquisition targets.

[0114]

With this, the player can easily feel with the game of the mobile phone 200 the same fun as the crane game arranged in the so-called game center or the like.

[0115]

11 and 12 is the line of sight of the player, and the plurality of hoses 20 indicate the movable range of the hose 20.

[0116]

As described above, since capsules 10 - 1 to 10 - 25 overlap, there are cases where a plurality of capsules 10 are judged when judging whether capsule 10 can be obtained.

[0117]

Therefore, when there are a plurality of capsules 10 within the same distance range with L1 and L2 within 5 dots, the determination unit 214 selects the capsule 10 having the smallest "prize capsule ID" value.

Of course, the capsule 10 having the largest value may be selected.

[0118]

Then, on the basis of the "difficulty level" of the capsule 10 indicated by the prize set data 222, the determination unit 214 compares the center position of the hose 20 based on L 1 and L 2 with the barycentric position of the capsule 10 (step S 20).

[0119]

For example, when the "degree of difficulty" is "A", the allowable range in which the capsule 10 can be acquired is set to a range of 5 dots square and the number of dots is narrowed by one each time the "difficulty level" is increased by one, And when the "difficulty level" is "E", it may be a range of one dot square.

[0120]

The determination unit 214 determines whether the positional relationship between the center

position of the hose 20 and the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 satisfies the allowable range, that is, whether or not the capsule 10 can be acquired (step S 22).

[0121]

When it is determined that the capsule 10 can be acquired, the information generating unit 212 generates game information indicating that the capsule 10 has been successfully acquired, and the image display unit 260 displays, on the basis of the game information, An image showing the capsule 10 as drawn into the hose 20 and an image showing the acquired prize are displayed (step S24), and the sound output unit 262 outputs so-called fanfare sound based on the game information.

[0122]

When it is determined that the capsule acquisition data 226 can be acquired, the update unit 216 writes information indicating which capsule 10 has been acquired in the capsule acquisition data 226, and adds the capsule acquisition data 226 to add points of the capsule 10 (Step S26).

[0123]

On the other hand, when the information generating unit 212 is not within the predetermined distance range (step S16), the information generating unit 212 generates game information indicating that acquisition of the capsule 10 has failed, and the image display unit 260 , An image indicating the suctioning trial operation of the hose 20 is displayed (step S 32), and the sound output unit 262 outputs a sad sound indicating that the game failed based on the game information.

[0124]

If the capsule 10 is within the predetermined distance range but is not within the range in which the capsule 10 can be acquired (step S 22), the information generating unit 212 generates game information indicating that the capsule 10 has been tried, Based on the game information, the display unit 260 displays an image showing the trial operation of suctioning of the hose 20 and an image showing the motion of the capsule 10 swinging (step S 28), and the sound output unit 262 displays, based on the game information, a failure As shown in FIG.

[0125]

If the capsule 10 is within the predetermined distance range but is not within the range in which the capsule 10 can be acquired (step S 22), the updating unit 216 updates the capsule arrangement data 224 so that the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 is changed (Step S

30).

[0126]

When the game is ended, the transmission / reception unit 290 transmits information indicating the contents of the capsule acquisition data 226 generated by the information generation unit 212 to the server 100.

[0127]

Based on the information, the server 100 transmits a game image as a prize, so-called ringtone or the like to the mobile phone 200 according to the contents of the capsule acquisition data 226.

[0128]

The player can display the game image or the like on the cellular phone 200 or can enjoy the ringtone or the like by outputting it by the mobile phone 200.

[0129]

As described above, the server 100 and the mobile phone 200 execute a game for acquiring the capsule 10 from the plurality of capsules 10.

[0130]

(Other explanation) Further, in the present embodiment, by displaying an arrow on the reference image 30 shown in FIGS. 2A to 2C and seeing the color and pattern in the arrow, the player can recognize the hose 20 so that it can grasp the amount of movement.

[0131]

FIG. 13 is a schematic diagram showing a display change of an arrow according to an example of this embodiment.

[0132]

The width of the capsule 10 corresponds to the length of the arrow.

Two rectangles with diagonal lines at the back and two rectangles without diagonal lines schematically represent the capsules 10 arranged in four.

[0133]

For example, in FIG. 13, the diagonally shaded arrow, the diagonally shaded arrow with only the left half, and the unpatterned arrow are displayed.

[0134]

When the first arrow is displayed, it indicates that the hose 20 is at the center position of the frontmost capsule 10 shown by oblique lines in FIG. 13, and in the case where the second arrow is displayed, It indicates that the hose 20 is located at an intermediate position between the frontmost capsule 10 and the second capsule 10 indicated by oblique lines, and in the case where the third arrow is displayed, it is indicated that the hose 20 is at the center position of the second capsule 10 .

[0135]

In this way, by indicating the positional relationship between the hose 20 and the capsule 10 by changing the color and pattern of the arrow, the player can objectively grasp the amount of movement of the hose 20.

[0136]

Also, there are the following types of prizes.

[0137]

14 (A) is a schematic diagram showing icons of game program parts, FIG. 14 (B) is a schematic diagram showing icons of game image parts, and FIG. 14 (C) FIG. 14 (D) is a schematic diagram showing game point icons. FIG.

[0138]

In the game image, icons of any one of FIG. 14 (A) to FIG. 14 (D) are displayed in the normal capsule 10.

The player can confirm what type of prize is contained in the capsule 10 by the icon.

[0139]

The capsule 10 has normal capsules 10, rare capsules including rare items, and detached capsules with nothing.

Further, the normal capsule 10 has five kinds of inclinations, and the center of gravity and display are different depending on the inclination.

[0140]

FIG. 15 (A) is a schematic diagram of a normal capsule tilted 90 degrees to the right, FIG. 15 (B) is a schematic diagram of a normal capsule inclined 45 degrees to the right, FIG. 15 (C) 15 (D) is a schematic view of a normal capsule inclined 45 degrees to the left, and FIG. 15 (E) is a schematic view of a normal capsule inclined to the left by 90 degrees FIG. 15 (F) is a schematic view of a rare capsule, and FIG. 15 (G) is a schematic view of a dislocation capsule.

[0141]

As shown in FIGS. 15 (A) to 15 (E), in order to display one of the icons in FIG. 14 (A) to FIG. 14 (D), the normal capsule 10 is half transparent .

), And the remaining half of the center of gravity position is translucent (it may be opaque).

) Part.

[0142]

In the present embodiment, the center of the translucent portion of the capsule 10 is set as the center of gravity, and the inclination of the capsule 10 is set to five types shown in FIGS. 15 (A) to 15 (E).

[0143]

That is, the inclination of the capsule 10 enables the player to visually grasp the center of gravity of the capsule 10.

[0144]

Also, the rare capsule shown in FIG. 15 (F) has the highest degree of difficulty of acquisition, the points are high and the number is small.

In the outlay capsule shown in FIG. 15 (G), although the player can not obtain items and points, the player can feel the enjoyment to acquire.

[0145]

As described above, according to the present embodiment, by allowing the center of gravity position to be set at a position different from the center position of the capsule 10, the player simply simply aligns the center of the hose 20 with the center of the capsule 10 , The capsule 10 can not be acquired and only when the center of gravity position of the capsule 10 and the center position of the hose 20 match each other, the capsule 10 can be acquired.

[0146]

In this way, it is possible to give the player a feeling that it is unlikely that they can acquire the object to be acquired.

[0147]

Further, according to the present embodiment, when the capsule 10 is missed, the position of the center of gravity of the capsule 10 is changed.

As a result, it is possible to perform an effect that simulates the operation at the time of actual acquisition of the capsule 10.

[0148]

By changing the position of the center of gravity in this way, even if the operation amount of the hose 20 is the same, it is possible to acquire the capsule 10 before the change, but making it impossible to obtain the capsule 10 after the change is possible.

[0149]

As a result, a more complicated operation is required, so that it is possible to further enhance the satisfaction level when the player acquires the capsule 10.

[0150]

Further, in the present embodiment, the capsule 10 can be acquired based on the "degree of difficulty" of the prize set data 222, the positional relationship between the center of gravity of the capsule 10 and the center position of the hose 20, acquisition trials are possible (missing), and impossible to acquire, and performs different effects.

[0151]

By doing this, you can entertain more players.

In addition, when the degree of difficulty is high, by making a strict judgment, it is possible to further enhance the satisfaction when the player acquires the capsule 10 with a high degree of difficulty.

[0152]

(Modification) Although the preferred embodiments to which the present invention is applied have been described above, the application of the present invention is not limited to the above-described embodiments, and various modifications are possible.

[0153]

For example, in the above-described embodiment, a so-called client server method of executing a game by sharing processing between the mobile phone 200 as a client and the server 100 is adopted. Alternatively, a game may be executed by a single (standalone) game apparatus. May be adopted.

[0154]

FIG. 16 is an external view of an arcade game device 400 according to an example of the present embodiment.

[0155]

The arcade game device 400 includes a screen 410, a plurality of operation buttons 420, a coin slot 430, and a prize outlet 440.

[0156]

In this manner, it is also possible to execute the game according to the present embodiment with a single commercial game device 400.

[0157]

When the capsule 10 in the game image is acquired by the hose 20 like the commercial game device 400, physical prizes (for example, stuffed animals and character goods) assigned to the capsule 10 are fed from the prize outlet 440. It can also be offered to players.

[0158]

Note that the game system for executing the game of this embodiment may be realized as a home game device.

[0159]

Of course, the functions of the mobile phone 200 and the functions of the server 100 may be distributed among a plurality of apparatuses and executed.

[0160]

In addition, the updating unit 116 of the server 100 may write the contents of the capsule acquisition data 226 from the plurality of mobile phones 200 in the user data 122, and perform ranking or the like based on the number of capsule acquisitions or acquired points or the like.

[0161]

In the above-described embodiment, the image of the capsule 10 is applied as an acquisition target displayed as a part of the game image. However, the image may be a character, a stuffed doll or the like in addition to the capsule 10.

[0162]

In the above-described embodiment, the center of gravity position is shown due to the difference in transparency in the image of the capsule 10 in order to visually indicate the position of the center of gravity. However, the color, pattern, shape, etc. of the position of the center of gravity are The game image may be generated differently.

[0163]

In the above-described embodiment, the operation of swinging the capsule 10 and the fanfare sound etc. are performed using both the game image and the game sound at the time of obtaining the capsule 10, but it is also possible to use only the game image, May be used.

[0164]

In the above-described embodiment, a plurality of acquisition targets are used, but one acquisition target may be used.

[0165]

Similarly, in the above-described embodiment, the image of the hose 20 is applied as an operation target displayed as a part of the game image. However, besides the hose 20, it may be a crane or the like.

Of course, a plurality of operation targets may be used.

[0166]

In the above-described embodiment, both of the arrangement of the capsule 10 and the arrangement of the capsule 10 are changed by a shuffle request, but either one may be used.

[0167]

In addition to the above-described shuffle request, for example, a case in which a player succeeds or fails to acquire an object to be acquired consecutively a predetermined number of times (two or more times) may be used as the change event.

[0168]

Furthermore, in the above-described embodiment, the mobile phone 200 is used as the terminal device. However, other than the mobile phone 200, for example, a PC (Personal Computer), a PDA (Personal Digital Assistants), a portable game device, It is also possible to use various terminal devices such as a domestic game device and an arcade game device.

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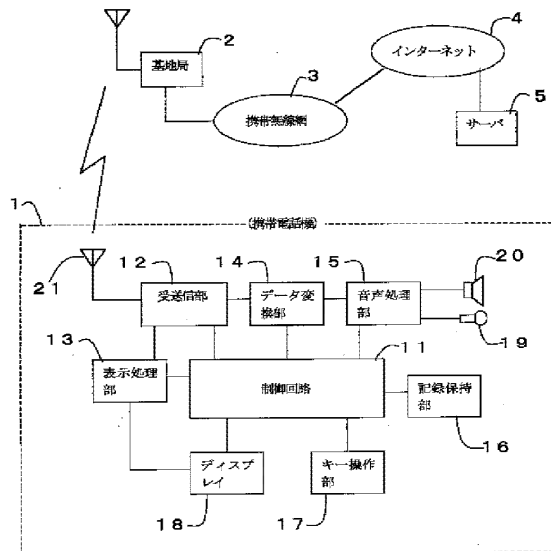
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(54) 【発明の名称】 携帯電話通信ゲームシステムおよびゲーム方法

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 携帯電話通信ゲームシステムにおけるゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトの授受を、不特定多数のユーザ間で行うことのできる技術を提供する。

【解決手段】 第1の携帯電話機においてゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトを競り希望価格とともにサーバに送信して登録し、第2の携帯電話機は該情報をサーバから受信して一覧表示し所望のオブジェクトを入手するようにした。またサーバは、該オブジェクトをカテゴリ別に分類して登録し、第2の携帯電話機は該カテゴリを指定して一覧表示するようにした。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項 1】 ゲームを提供するサーバと、該サーバに接続され前記ゲームのデータを受送信し実行する少なくとも第 1 の携帯電話機および第 2 の携帯電話機とからなる携帯電話通信ゲームシステムにあって、前記第 1 の携帯電話機は、

前記ゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトのデータを該オブジェクトの競り希望値とともに前記サーバに送信し登録する登録手段を備え、前記サーバは、

前記第 1 の携帯電話機により送信されたオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を格納する記録手段を備え、前記第 2 の携帯電話機は、

前記サーバの記録手段から前記オブジェクトのデータおよび前記競り希望値を受信し表示する表示制御手段と、前記表示制御手段により表示したオブジェクトのデータを選択し、当該競り希望値を前記第 1 の携帯電話機に送信することにより該オブジェクトのデータを入手する入手手段とを備えたことを特徴とする携帯電話通信ゲームシステム。

【請求項 2】 前記サーバは、前記オブジェクトのデータをカテゴリ別に分類する分類手段を備え、

前記記録手段は、前記分類手段により分類されたカテゴリ別に前記オブジェクトのデータを格納し、

前記第 2 の携帯電話機は、前記カテゴリを指定するカテゴリ指定手段を備え、

前記表示制御手段は、前記カテゴリ指定手段により指定されたカテゴリのオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を表示することを特徴とする請求項 1 記載の携帯電話通信ゲームシステム。

【請求項 3】 ゲームを提供するサーバと、該サーバに接続され前記ゲームのデータを受送信し実行する少なくとも第 1 の携帯電話機および第 2 の携帯電話機とからなる携帯電話通信ゲーム方法にあって、

前記第 1 の携帯電話機は、前記ゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトのデータを該オブジェクトの競り希望値とともに前記サーバに送信し、

前記サーバは、送信された前記オブジェクトのデータをカテゴリ別に分類し、

分類されたカテゴリ別に前記オブジェクトのデータを記録手段に格納し、

前記第 2 の携帯電話機は、分類された前記カテゴリを指定し、

指定されたカテゴリのオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を前記記録手段から受取り表示し、

前記表示したオブジェクトのデータを選択し、当該競り希望値を前記第 1 の携帯電話機に送信し、

前記オブジェクトのデータを前記サーバの前記記録手段から入手することを特徴とする携帯電話通信ゲーム方法。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、ゲームプログラムをサーバから読み込んで携帯電話機でゲームを行う携帯電話通信ゲームシステムおよびゲーム方法に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】従来、携帯電話機では文字メッセージサービスが行われていたが、該サービスにおいて送信できる情報は文字中心であり、図形情報を必要とするゲームには不向きであった。

10 【0003】今日、携帯電話機でパケット通信を用いたいわゆる i モードが提供されたことから、文字に加え比較的簡単な図形情報の送信が可能となった。これに伴い、サーバから携帯電話機にメールゲーム、双六ゲーム等の各種ゲームのサービスが提供されるようになった。このようなゲームの一部には、ゲーム中でたとえば特殊なアイテムやキャラクタ等のオブジェクトの収集を目的としたものもある。

【0004】

20 【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかし、このような携帯電話機を使用したゲームでは、ゲーム中で収集したオブジェクトを単に個人で所有するだけにとどまらず、ユーザ間で自慢しあったり授受することによりさらにゲームの楽しさを増大することができる。このようなオブジェクトの授受を行うためには、不特定多数のユーザの中から譲渡および受領を希望する情報を収集し公開するシステムが必要であった。

30 【0005】本発明はこのように鑑みてなされたものであり、携帯電話通信ゲームシステムにおけるゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトの授受を、不特定多数のユーザ間で行うことのできる技術を提供することにある。

【0006】

40 【課題を解決するための課題】本発明の第 1 の手段は、ゲームを提供するサーバと、該サーバに接続され前記ゲームのデータを受送信し実行する少なくとも第 1 の携帯電話機および第 2 の携帯電話機とからなる携帯電話通信ゲームシステムにあって、前記第 1 の携帯電話機は、前記ゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトのデータを該オブジェクトの競り希望値とともに前記サーバに送信し登録する登録手段を備え、前記サーバは、前記第 1 の携帯電話機により送信されたオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を格納する記録手段を備え、前記第 2 の携帯電話機は、前記サーバの記録手段から前記オブジェクトのデータおよび前記競り希望値を受信し表示する表示制御手段と、前記表示制御手段により表示したオブジェクトのデータを選択し、当該競り希望値を前記第 1 の携帯電話機に送信することにより該オブジェクトのデータを入手する入手手段とを備えたことを特徴とする携帯電話通信ゲームシステムである。

50 【0007】これによれば、第 1 の携帯電話からオブジェクトを競り希望値とともにサーバに登録しておき、該

登録情報を第2の携帯電話から閲覧し、競り希望値との兼ね合いから所望のオブジェクトを当該競り希望値を支払うことで入手できる。

【0008】ここに、オブジェクトは、たとえばカードや宝物等のアイテム、ゲーム中に登場するキャラクタ等を意味する。競り希望値は、オブジェクトを授受する条件として見返りに受領あるいは支払う値であり、ゲーム中で使用する仮想の金額、キャラクタの属性値等を意味する。サーバの記録手段は、ハードディスク、フロッピー（登録商標）ディスク、メモリーカード等の記録媒体を意味する。

【0009】本発明の第2の手段は、前記第1の手段において、前記サーバは、前記オブジェクトのデータをカテゴリ別に分類する分類手段を備え、前記記録手段は、前記分類手段により分類されたカテゴリ別に前記オブジェクトのデータを格納し、前記第2の携帯電話機は、前記カテゴリを指定するカテゴリ指定手段を備え、前記表示制御手段は、前記カテゴリ指定手段により指定されたカテゴリのオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を表示するものである。

【0010】これにより、オブジェクトをカテゴリ毎に分類してサーバに登録しておき、該カテゴリを指定することにより当該カテゴリのオブジェクトが表示されることから、所望するオブジェクトの授受が容易となる。

【0011】本発明の第3の手段は、ゲームを提供するサーバと、該サーバに接続され前記ゲームのデータを受送信し実行する少なくとも第1の携帯電話機および第2の携帯電話機とからなる携帯電話通信ゲーム方法であって、前記第1の携帯電話機は、前記ゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトのデータを該オブジェクトの競り希望値とともに前記サーバに送信し、前記サーバは、送信された前記オブジェクトのデータをカテゴリ別に分類し、分類されたカテゴリ別に前記オブジェクトのデータを記録手段に格納し、前記第2の携帯電話機は、分類された前記カテゴリを指定し、指定されたカテゴリのオブジェクトのデータおよび競り希望値を前記記録手段から受取り表示し、前記表示したオブジェクトのデータを選択し、当該競り希望値を前記第1の携帯電話機に送信し、前記オブジェクトのデータを前記サーバの前記記録手段から入手することを特徴とする携帯電話通信ゲーム方法である。

【0012】これによれば、オブジェクトを譲渡希望するユーザは、該オブジェクトを競り希望値とともにサーバに登録しておく。一方、受領希望のユーザは、該登録情報を閲覧し、複数のユーザから同種のオブジェクトが複数登録されていれば、競り希望値を勘案の上、当該競り希望値を支払うことで入手できる。

【0013】

【発明の実施の形態】本発明の実施の形態を図に基づいて説明する。図1は、本実施形態のシステム構成図を示

している。携帯電話機1は、マイクロコンピュータを主体とした制御手段としての制御回路11を備え、該制御回路11には送受信手段としての送受信部12、表示処理部13、データ交換部14、音声処理部15、短縮番号や着信等を記録する記録保持部16およびキー操作部17が接続されている。また表示処理部13には液晶表示のディスプレイ18が、音声処理部15にはマイク19ならびにスピーカ20が接続されている。

【0014】キー操作部17のiモードキーが押下されると、制御回路11はiモードに設定し送受信部12からパケット通信によりアンテナ21を介して、携帯電話網3に接続された基地局2にゲームサービスの提供を要求する。基地局2は携帯電話網3と相互接続されたインターネット4を介して、サーバ5から該サーバ5の図示せぬハードディスクに格納されたゲームの通信データを携帯電話機1のアンテナ21に提供する。

【0015】送受信部12は、基地局2からアンテナ21に送信された当該ゲームの通信データを復調処理し、該復調処理された通信データを表示処理部13に出力する。表示処理部13は、該通信データを駆動信号に変換しディスプレイ18に出力し、ディスプレイ18は、該駆動信号により画像を表示する。

【0016】通話モードについては本発明と直接関連性はないが簡単に述べる。すなわち、音声処理部15は、マイク19から与えられた受話信号を符号化することにより音声データを生成し、該音声データをデータ変換部14に出力する。データ変換部14は、該音声データを通信データに変換し、送受信部12は、この通信データを変調処理してアンテナ21から基地局2へ送信する。また送受信部12は、基地局2からアンテナ21に送信された通信データを復調処理し、データ変換部14は音声データに変換する。音声処理部15は、該音声データを復号化しスピーカ20へ出力する。

【0017】以下、本実施形態のサーバ5から提供されるゲームを説明する。図2は、ディスプレイ18に表示されるメニュー画面を示している。該画面でカーソルをキー操作部17の所定のキーを押下し移動させ、「モンスタースロット」、「冒険に出る」または「のみの市」を選択する。「モンスタースロット」は、本ゲーム中で使用される仮想の貨幣である「ゴールド」を得るためのミニゲームの1つの例であり、後述の図3で説明する。「冒険に出る」は、モンスターカードを収集するためのメインゲームであり、図4乃至図6で説明する。また「のみの市」は、モンスターカードを授受するための機能であり、図7乃至図14で説明する。

【0018】図3は、メニュー画面（図2参照）で「モンスタースロット」を選択したときに表示されるスロット画面である。すなわち、該画面上部に3個のスロットが回転しており、「ストップ」を選択することで一つずつ停止させ、各スロットに表示されたモンスターが揃え

ば、該揃い方により仮想の貨幣である「ゴールド」が得られる。また、画面下部の「戻る」を選択するとメニュー画面(図2参照)に戻る。

【0019】図4は、メニュー画面(図2参照)で「冒険に出る」を選択したときのフィールド画面の例を示している。該画面には草原32、山33等が配置されたフィールド上にプレイヤーキャラクタ31が表示され、該プレイヤーキャラクタ31を「北へ」「東へ」「南へ」「西へ」に該当する操作部17のキーを押下することにより、当該方向に移動表示することができる。フィールド上には草原32、山33以外にも図示せぬ川、海、洞窟、町等があり、プレイヤーキャラクタ31は、草原32は移動できるが山33、川、海は徒歩では移動できない。また洞窟の中はダンジョン(地下迷路)があり、町には店や宿屋が配置されていていずれも移動して入ることができる。

【0020】図5は、敵Monsterとの戦闘画面の例を示している。プレイヤーキャラクタ31はMonsterを封印したMonsterカード(以下、単に「カード」という)を複数所持することができる。該カードは封印されたMonsterにより種類があり、該種類により識別番号が付与されている。図4でプレイヤーキャラクタ31を移動表示すると、所定の個所あるいは乱数により敵Monsterに遭遇する。ここでプレイヤーキャラクタ31が前述のカードを所持していると、所持したカードの内、1枚のカードに封印されたMonsterが蘇り敵Monsterと戦う。この例では「マドハンド(仲間を呼ぶとともに相手を混乱させる特技を持つ)」が蘇り、出現した敵Monster「くさったしたい(毒の息を吐き相手を攻撃するとともに舐めまわして自身を回復させる特技を持つ)」と戦闘になっている。本画面下部の「進む」を選択すると次の画面(図6参照)へ進む。

【0021】図6は、戦闘画面(図5参照)で「進む」を選択すると表示される戦闘結果画面の例を示している。図6(a)は、敵Monsterに勝った場合であり、該敵Monsterをカードに封印することができ(この例では敵Monsterが「くさったしたい」のカードに封印された)プレイヤーキャラクタ31が該カードを取得できる。ここで「進む」を選択するとフィールド画面(図4参照)へ戻る。一方、図6(b)は、敵Monsterに負けた場合であり、「進む」を選択するとプレイヤーキャラクタ31はゲーム中で使用される仮想の所持金を一定額取られるとともに、前回セーブした地点である町の宿屋に戻される。なお、戦闘の勝敗は、戦う双方のMonsterがそれぞれ持つ攻撃力や防御力、および乱数でその都度設定される攻撃の有効性等により決定される。

【0022】図7は、メニュー画面(図2参照)で「のみの市」を選択したときに表示されるのみの市メニュー画面である。該画面から「カードを売る」または「カードを出品」を選択できる。

【0023】図8は、のみの市メニュー画面(図7参照)で「カードを出品」を選択したときに表示される出品画面を示している。該画面で出品する「カード識別番号」および「売りたい値段」を入力するとサーバ5に登録される。この手順において、手持ちカードを確認したい場合は、該画面の「カードを見る」を選択すると次に説明する手持ちカード一覧画面(図9(a)参照)が表示される。また後述の価格一覧画面(図12参照)の価格を参考として、出品するカードの売りたい値段を決めることができる。

【0024】図9(a)は、出品画面(図8参照)で「カードを見る」を選択したときに表示される手持ちカード一覧画面の例を示している。手持ちカードのカード識別番号一覧が表示され、該一覧から所望の1つを選択すると図9(b)の当該カード識別番号のカード詳細画面が表示される。この画面で希少度は星印の数で表示される。

【0025】図10は、のみの市メニュー画面(図7参照)で「カードを買う」を選択したときに表示されるカテゴリ指定画面である。カテゴリは、希少性により分類されている。

【0026】図11は、カテゴリ指定画面(図10参照)で「これは珍しい」を指定したときに表示される出品カード一覧画面の例を示している。現在出品されているカードのうち、当該カテゴリに属するものが表示される。

【0027】図12は、出品カード一覧画面(図11参照)ではぐれメタルのカードを選択したときに表示される価格一覧画面の例を示している。現在出品されている当該カードの販売価格が一覧表示される。カードを購入する場合は、該一覧から所望の1つ(通常は価格の低いもの)を選択する。また購入をやめる場合は「戻る」を選択する。

【0028】上述のゲーム内容のうち、本発明の要旨である「のみの市」の処理をタイムチャートで示したものが図13乃至図16である。まず図13および図14でカードの出品処理を説明する。第1の携帯電話機は、iモードキーが押下されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(101)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信しメニュー画面データをハードディスクから読み取り、第1の携帯電話機に送信する(102)。第1の携帯電話機はサーバ5からメニュー画面データを受信し、ディスプレイ18に表示する(103)。該画面から「のみの市」が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(104)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信しのみ市のメニュー画面データをハードディスクから読み取り、第1の携帯電話機に送信する(105)。第1の携帯電話機は、サーバ5からのみの市メニュー画面データを受信し表示する(106)。該画面からキー操作部17の操作により「カード出品」が選択されると該情報をサーバ5に送信する

(107)。サーバ5は、カード出品情報を受信し、出品画面データをハードディスクから読み出し、第1の携帯電話機へ送信する(108)。第1の携帯電話機は、出品画面データを受信し該画面を表示する(109)。ここで該出品画面から「カードを見る」が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(110)。サーバ5は、「カードを見る」の情報を受信すると、第1の携帯電話機の手持ちカードをハードディスクから検索し(111)、手持ちカード一覧画面データを該携帯電話機に送信する(112)。第1の携帯電話機は、該データを受信し手持ちカード一覧画面を表示する(113)。該画面からカード番号が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(114)。サーバ5は、カード識別番号を受信すると該番号でカードをハードディスクから検索し(115)、カード詳細画面データをハードディスクから読み出し、第1の携帯電話機に送信する(116)。第1の携帯電話機は、検索結果を受信しカード詳細画面を表示する(117)。該画面の「戻る」が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(118)。サーバ5は、「戻る」を受信すると、再度出品画面データをハードディスクから読み出し、第1の携帯電話機に送信する(119)。第1の携帯電話機は、出品画面データを受信し表示する(120)。該画面からカード番号および買いたい価格が入力されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(121)。サーバ5は、カード番号および買いたい価格を受信し記録手段に格納する(122)。

【0029】次に図15および図16でカードを買う処理を説明する。第2の携帯電話機は、iモードキーが押下されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(201)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信しメニュー画面データをハードディスクから読み取り、第2の携帯電話機に送信する(202)。第2の携帯電話機はサーバ5からメニュー画面データを受信し、ディスプレイ18に表示する(203)。該画面から「のみの市」が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(204)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信し「のみの市」メニュー画面データをハードディスクから読み取り、第2の携帯電話機に送信する(205)。第2の携帯電話機は、のみの市メニュー画面をディスプレイ18に表示した状態で(206)、キー操作部17のキー操作により「カードを買う」が選択されると該情報をサーバ5に送信する(207)。サーバ5は、カテゴリ指定画面データをハードディスクから読み出し、第2の携帯電話機に送信する(208)。第2の携帯電話機は、カテゴリ指定画面データを受信し表示する(209)。キー操作部17のキー操作によりカテゴリが選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(210)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信しハードディスクから該カテゴリの出品カードを検索し(211)、出品カード一覧画面データとして第2の携帯電話機に送信する(212)。第2の携帯電話機は、該カード一覧画面デ

ータを受信し表示する(213)。キー操作部18のキー操作によりカードが選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(214)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信し当該カードの売りたい価格をハードディスクから検索し(215)、価格一覧画面データとして第2の携帯電話機に送信する(216)。第2の携帯電話機は、該価格一覧画面データを受信し表示する(217)。キー操作部18のキー操作により価格が選択されると、該情報をサーバ5に送信する(218)。サーバ5は、該情報を受信し当該カードデータを第2の携帯電話機に送信する(219)。第2の携帯電話機は、該カードデータを受信する(220)。またサーバ5は該カードデータをハードディスクから削除する(221)。

【0030】以上説明したように、本実施例によれば、カードを売りたいユーザは、該カードを売りたい価格とともにサーバに登録しておき、買いたいユーザは、カテゴリ別に一覧表示されたカードの中から所望のカードを入手することができる。

【0031】なお、カードを希望価格で売ることに加え、交換を希望するカード名とともにサーバに登録し、当該カードを所有するユーザと交換するようにしてもよい。

【0032】

【発明の効果】本発明によれば、携帯電話通信ゲームシステムにおけるゲーム中で取得したオブジェクトの授受を、不特定多数のユーザ間で行うことのできる技術を提供することができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】 本発明のハードウェア構成図

【図2】 メニュー画面を説明するための説明図

【図3】 スロット画面を説明するための説明図

【図4】 フィールド画面を説明するための説明図

【図5】 戦闘画面を説明するための説明図

【図6】 戦闘結果画面を説明するための説明図

【図7】 のみの市メニュー画面を説明するための説明図

【図8】 出品画面を説明するための説明図

【図9】 手持カード一覧画面を説明するための説明図

【図10】 カテゴリ指定画面を説明するための説明図

【図11】 出品カード一覧画面を説明するための説明図

【図12】 価格一覧画面を説明するための説明図

【図13】 実施例を説明するためのタイムチャート図

【図14】 実施例を説明するためのタイムチャート図

【図15】 実施例を説明するためのタイムチャート図

【図16】 実施例を説明するためのタイムチャート図

【符号の説明】

1 携帯電話機

2 基地局

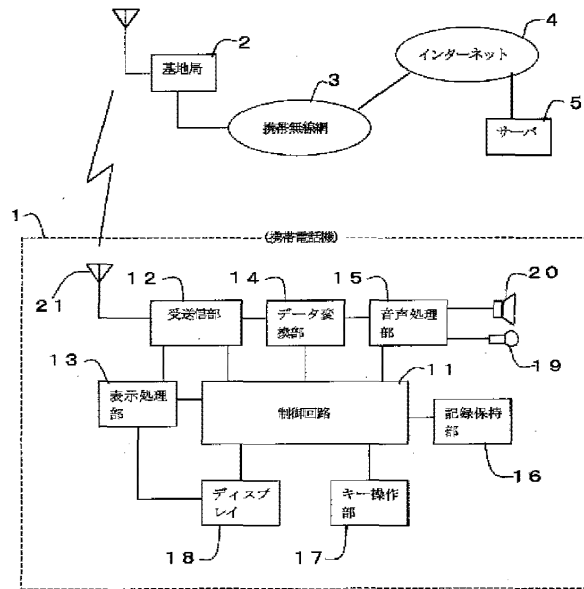
3 携帯電話網

- 4 インターネット
- 5 サーバ
- 17 キー操作部

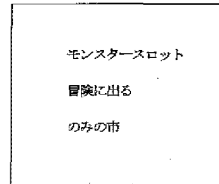
- * 18 ディスプレイ
- 31 プレイヤキャラクタ

*

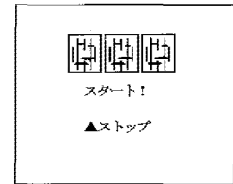
【図1】



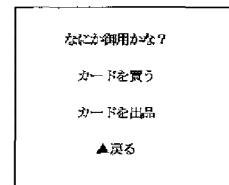
【図2】



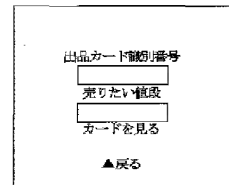
【図3】



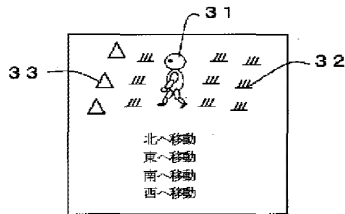
【図7】



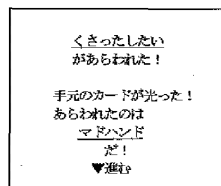
【図8】



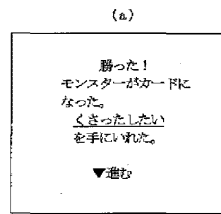
【図4】



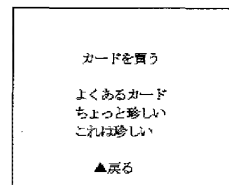
【図5】



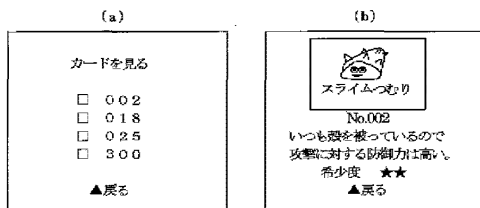
【図6】



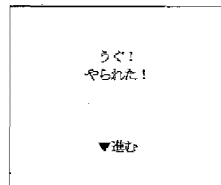
【図10】



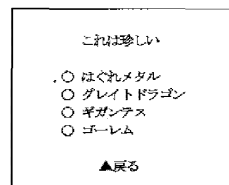
【図9】



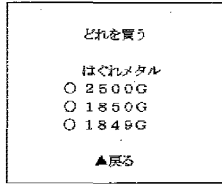
(b)



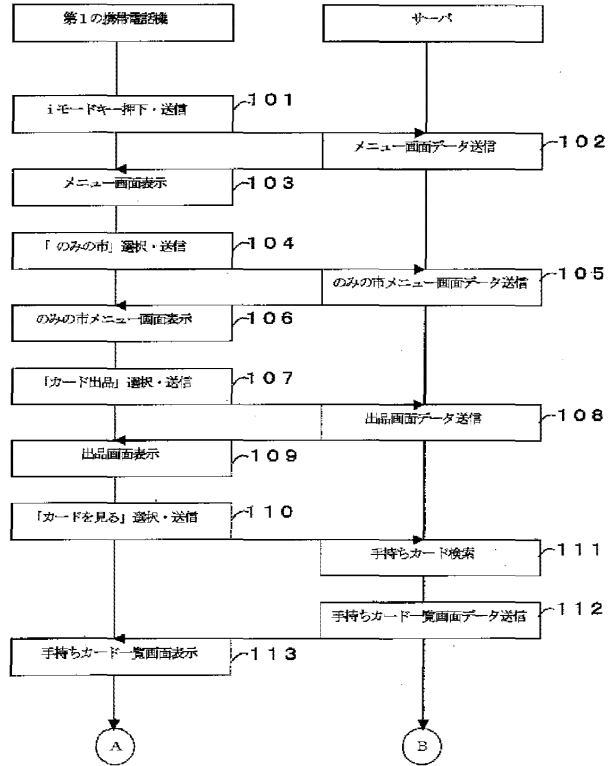
【図11】



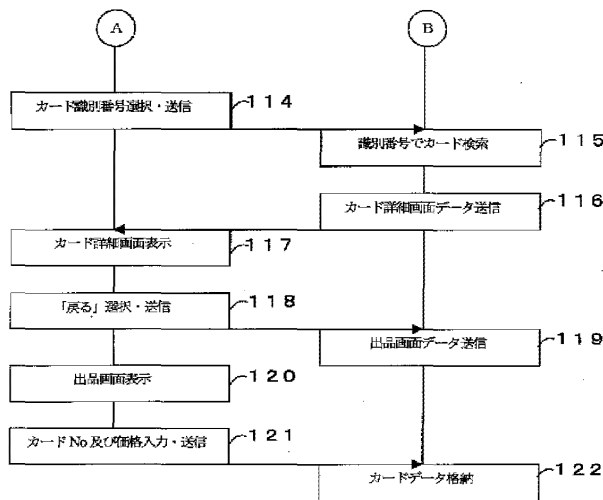
【図12】



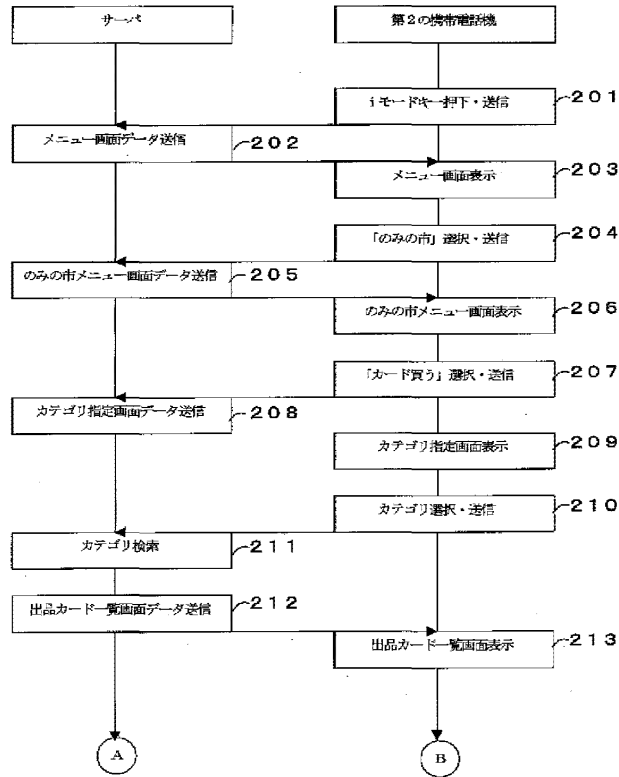
【図13】



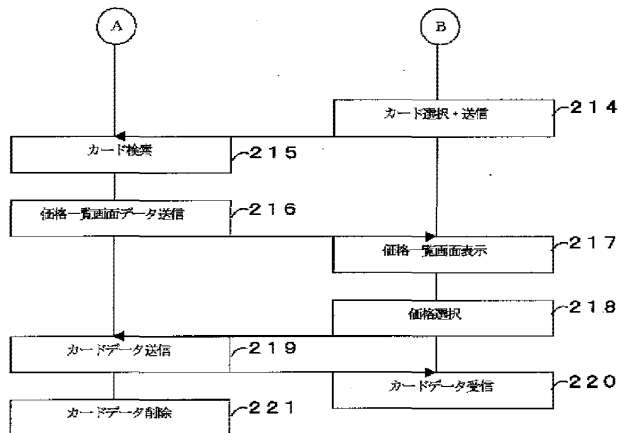
【図14】



【図15】



【図16】



フロントページの続き

Fターム(参考) 2C001 AA00 BA06 BB00 BB02 BB08
BD00 BD07 CB01 CB06 CB08
CC03 DA00 DA04
5K067 AA21 BB04 BB21 EE02 EE25
FF02
9A001 CC05 JJ 25 JJ 76 KK45 KK56
KK60

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[PAJ](#) [Detail](#) [Image](#)

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H04B 7/26

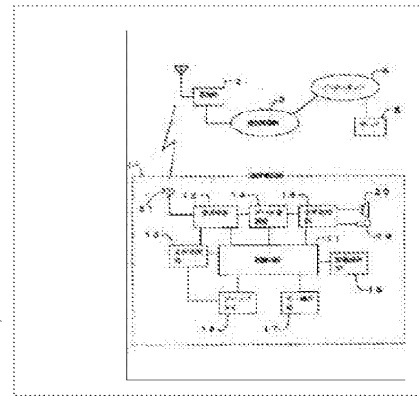
(21)Application number 2000-118709
(22)Date of filing 16.03.2000
(71)Applicant ENIX CORP
(72)Inventor KADO TOSHIHIRO
HENMI HARUHIKO

(54)CELLULAR PHONE COMMUNICATION GAME SYSTEM AND GAME METHOD

(57)Abstract

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a technology by which the transfer of an object obtained during a game in a cellular phone communication game system can be performed among a non-specified large number of users.

SOLUTION: An object which is obtained during a game by a first cellular phone is transmitted to a server together with a desired bid price and registered. Then, a second cellular phone receives the information from the server, and displays the information as a chart, and a desirable object is acquired. Or, the server registers the objects after classifying them under categories, and the second cellular phone designates the categories and displays them as a chart.



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3. In the drawings, any words are not translated.

CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] A portable telephone communication game system comprising:
A server which provides a game.

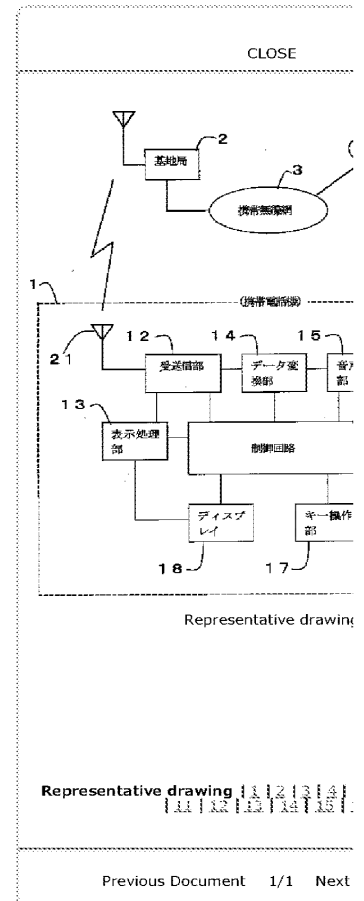
It is connected to the server and is in a portable telephone communication game system which carries out the receiving and sending of the data of the aforementioned game, and performs it and which consists of a first cellular phone and a second cellular phone even if small, Said first cellular phone is provided with a registration means to transmit to the aforementioned server and to register data of an object acquired in the aforementioned game with an auction market desired value of the object, and the aforementioned server, A display control means which it has a recording device which stores data and an auction market desired value of an object which were transmitted by said first cellular phone, said second cellular phone receives data and the aforementioned auction market desired value of the aforementioned object from a recording device of the aforementioned server, and it displays.

An acquiring means which obtains data of the object by choosing data of an object displayed by the aforementioned display control means, and transmitting the auction market desired value concerned to said first cellular phone.

[Claim 2] The aforementioned server is provided with a sorting means which classifies data of the aforementioned object according to a category, and the aforementioned recording device, Store data of the aforementioned object according to a category classified according to the aforementioned sorting means, and said second cellular phone, The portable telephone communication game system according to claim 1, wherein it has a category setting means which specifies the aforementioned category and the aforementioned display control means displays data and an auction market desired value of an object of a category which were specified by the aforementioned category setting means.

[Claim 3] Are in a portable telephone communication game method characterized by comprising the following, and said first cellular phone, With an auction market desired value of the object, transmit data of an object acquired in the aforementioned game to the aforementioned server, and the aforementioned server, Classify transmitted data of the aforementioned object according to a category, store data of the aforementioned object in a recording device according to a classified category, and said second cellular phone, Specify the classified aforementioned category, and receive data and an auction market desired value of an object of a category which were specified from the aforementioned recording device, and it displays them, A portable telephone communication game method choosing data of an object which displayed [aforementioned], transmitting the auction market desired value concerned to said first cellular phone, and data of the aforementioned object coming to hand from the aforementioned recording device of the aforementioned server.

A server which provides a game.
at least [which is connected to the server, carries out the receiving and sending of the data of the aforementioned game, and performs it] -- the 1st cellular phone and a second cellular phone.



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[PAJ] **Detail** Image

CLAIMS DETAILED DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS DRAWINGS

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention]The present invention relates to the portable telephone communication game system and game method which read a game program from a server and perform a game with a cellular phone.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art]Although the character message service was conventionally performed with the cellular phone, the information which can be transmitted in the service was based on characters, and was unsuitable for the game which needs graphic information.

[0003]Since what is called an I mode using packet communication was provided with the cellular phone today, in addition to the character, transmission of comparatively easy graphic information was attained. In connection with this, service of various games, such as an e-mail game and a sugoroku game, came to be provided for a cellular phone from a server. In a part of such a game, it is among a game, for example, the thing aiming at collection of objects, such as a special item and a character, is also.

[0004]

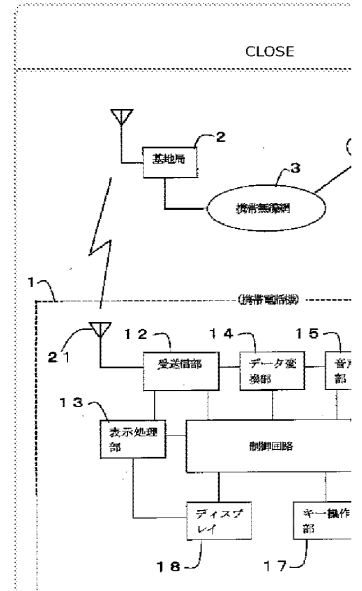
[Problem to be solved by the invention]However, in the game which uses such a cellular phone, the pleasure of a game can be further increased by boasting only of owning the objects collected in the game only individually among users, and being, or delivering and receiving. In order to deliver and receive such an object, the system which collects and releases the information which wishes transfer and receipt out of many and unspecified users was required. [0005]It is in providing the technology which the present invention is made in view of such a point, and can deliver and receive the object acquired in the game in a portable telephone communication game system among many and unspecified users.

[0006]

[Problem for solving problem] It is connected to the server which provides a game, and the server, and the first means of the present invention is in the portable telephone communication game system which carries out the receiving and sending of the data of the aforementioned game, and performs it and which consists of a first cellular phone and second cellular phone even if small, The above-mentioned first cellular phone is provided with a registration means to transmit to the aforementioned server and to register the data of the object acquired in the aforementioned game with the auction market desired value of the object, and the aforementioned server, Have a recording device which stores the data and the auction market desired value of an object which were transmitted by the above-mentioned first cellular phone, and the above-mentioned second cellular phone, The display control means which receives and displays the data and the aforementioned auction market desired value of the aforementioned object from the recording device of the aforementioned server, It is a portable telephone communication game system provided with the acquiring means which obtains the data of the object by choosing the data of the object displayed by the aforementioned display control means, and transmitting the auction market desired value concerned to the above-mentioned first cellular phone.

[0007]According to this, it competes for an object from a first mobile phone, and registers with the server with the desired value, the registration information is perused from a second mobile phone, and a desired object can be obtained by paying the auction market desired value concerned from balance with an auction market desired value.

[0008]An object means here the character etc. which appear, for example into items, such as



Representative drawing

Representative drawing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

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a card and a treasure, and a game. An auction market desired value is a value received or paid to collateral as conditions which deliver and receive an object, and means the amount of money of the imagination used in a game, the attribute value of a character, etc. The recording device of a server means recording media, such as a hard disk, a floppy (registered trademark) disk, and memory card.

[0009]In the above-mentioned first means, the second means of the present invention the aforementioned server, Have a sorting means which classifies the data of the aforementioned object according to a category, and the aforementioned recording device, Store the data of the aforementioned object according to the category classified according to the aforementioned sorting means, and the above-mentioned second cellular phone, Having a category setting means which specifies the aforementioned category, the aforementioned display control means displays the data and the auction market desired value of an object of a category which were specified by the aforementioned category setting means.

[0010]By this, an object is classified for every category and it registers with the server, and since the object of the category concerned is displayed by specifying the category, transfer of a desired object becomes easy.

[0011]It is connected to the server which provides a game, and the server, and the 3rd means of the present invention is in the portable telephone communication game method which carries out the receiving and sending of the data of the aforementioned game, and performs it and which consists of a first cellular phone and second cellular phone even if small, the above-mentioned first cellular phone transmits the data of the object acquired in the aforementioned game to the aforementioned server with the auction market desired value of the object -- the aforementioned server, Classify the transmitted data of the aforementioned object according to a category, store the data of the aforementioned object in a recording device according to the classified category, and the above-mentioned second cellular phone, Specify the classified aforementioned category, and receive the data and the auction market desired value of an object of a category which were specified from the aforementioned recording device, and it displays them, It is a portable telephone communication game method choosing the data of the object which displayed [aforementioned], transmitting the auction market desired value concerned to the above-mentioned first cellular phone, and the data of the aforementioned object coming to hand from the aforementioned recording device of the aforementioned server.

[0012]According to this, the user who does transfer hope of the object competes for the object, and registers with the server with the desired value. On the other hand, if the registration information is perused and multiple objects of the same kind are registered from a plurality of users, the user of receipt hope can obtain by paying the auction market desired value concerned, after taking an auction market desired value into consideration.

[0013]

[Mode for carrying out the invention]An embodiment of the invention is described based on the figures. Fig.1 shows the system configuration figure of this embodiment. The cellular phone 1 is provided with the control circuit 11 as a control means which made the microcomputer the subject, The record holding part 16 and the key operation section 17 which record the transmission and reception section 12, the display processing part 13, the data exchange part 14, the voice processing part 15, an abbreviated number, arrival, etc. as a transmission and reception means are connected to the control circuit 11. The display 18 of liquid crystal display is connected to the display processing part 13, and the microphone 19 and the loudspeaker 20 are connected to the voice processing part 15.

[0014]If the I mode key of the key operation section 17 is pressed, the control circuit 11 will require offer of game service of the base station 2 which set to the I mode and was connected to the portable telephone network 3 via the antenna 21 by packet communication from the transmission and reception section 12. The base station 2 provides the antenna 21 of the cellular phone 1 with the commo data of the game stored in the hard disk which the server 5 to the server 5 does not illustrate via the Internet 4 by which interconnection was carried out to the portable telephone network 3.

[0015]The transmission and reception section 12 carries out recovery processing of the commo data of the game concerned transmitted to the antenna 21 from the base station 2, and outputs the commo data by which recovery processing was carried out to the display processing part 13. The display processing part 13 converts the commo data to a driving signal, and outputs it to the display 18, and the display 18 displays an image with the driving signal.

[0016]Although it is directly irrelevant to the present invention about talk mode, it states briefly. That is, by coding the receiver signal given from the microphone 19, the voice processing part 15 generates voice data, and outputs the voice data to the data conversion part 14. The data conversion part 14 converts the voice data to commo data, and the transmission and reception section 12 carries out the modulation process of this commo data, and transmits it to the base station 2 from the antenna 21. The transmission and reception section 12 carries out recovery processing of the commo data transmitted to the antenna 21 from the base station 2, and converts the data conversion part 14 to voice data. The voice processing part 15 decrypts the voice data, and outputs it to the loudspeaker 20.

[0017]Hereinafter, the game provided from the server 5 of this embodiment is described. Fig.2 shows the menu screen displayed on the display 18. On the screen, the predetermined key of the key operation section 17 is pressed, a cursor is moved, and a "monster slot", "it appearing in an adventure", or "the city of a chisel" is chosen. A "monster slot" is one example of the mini game for obtaining the "gold" which is the money of the imagination used in this game, and it describes it by the below-mentioned Fig.3. It is a main game for "it appears in an adventure" to collect monster cards, and describes by the Fig.6 to Fig.4. "The city of a chisel" is a function for delivering and receiving a monster card, and describes by the Fig.14 to Fig.7.

[0018]Fig.3 is a slot screen displayed when a "monster slot" is chosen by a menu screen (refer to Fig.2). That is, three slots are rotating in the screen upper part, and it stops one at a time by choosing a "stop", and if the monster displayed on each slot gathers, the "gold" which is the money of imagination will be obtained depending on the way of gathering. If it chooses it "returns" of a bottom of screen, it will return to a menu screen (refer to Fig.2).

[0019]Fig.4 shows the example of the field screen when it chooses "it appears in an adventure" by a menu screen (refer to Fig.2). A moving display can be carried out in the direction concerned by displaying the player character 31 on the field where the prairie 32, the mountain 33, etc. are arranged in the screen, and depressing the key of the operating part 17 which corresponds the player character 31 to "north", the "east", "south", and the "west." On the field, a river, the sea, a cave, a town, etc. which are not illustrated besides prairie 32 and mountain 33 are, and in the prairie 32, on foot, the player character 31 cannot move in the mountain 33, a river, and the sea, although it can move. In the inside of a cave, there is a dungeon (underground maze), the store and the inn are arranged in the town, and a gap can also move and enter.

[0020]Fig.5 shows the example of the battle screen with an enemy monster. The player character 31 can possess multiple monster cards (only henceforth a "card") which sealed the monster. The card has a type by the monster in which it was sealed, and the identification number is given by the type. If the moving display of the player character 31 is carried out by Fig.4, an enemy monster will be encountered with a predetermined part or random number. If the player character 31 possesses the above-mentioned card here, the monster in which it was sealed by one card among the possessed cards will revive, and it will fight with an enemy monster. the enemy monster which "MADOHANDO (it has the special ability of confusing a partner while calling an associate)" revived in this example, and appeared -- "-- it rotted -- I would like to carry out (while vomiting the breath of poison and attacking a partner, it has the special ability of licking about, coming out and recovering self) -- "-- it is battling. If it chooses it "proceeds" of this bottom of screen, it will go to the next screen (refer to Fig.6).

[0021]The example of the battle result screen displayed that Fig.6 chooses "it proceeds" on a battle screen (refer to Fig.5) is shown. Fig.6 (a) is a case where an enemy monster is won, the enemy monster can be sealed in a card and the player (this example -- enemy monster -- "-- it rotted -- I would like to carry out -- " -- sealed by card) character 31 can acquire the card. If it chooses here "it proceeds", it will return to a field screen (refer to Fig.4). On the other hand, Fig.6 (b) is a case where an enemy monster is lost, and if it chooses "it proceeds", the player character 31 will be returned to the inn of the town which is the point which saved last time the money in hand of the imagination used in a game with *****. The victory or defeat of a battle are determined by the validity etc. of the attack set up each time by the aggressivity and defense power which the monster of the both sides which fight has, respectively, and random numbers.

[0022]Fig.7 is a city menu screen of only being displayed when "the city of a chisel" is chosen by a menu screen (refer to Fig.2). It can choose "a card being sold" from the screen, or "it being exhibition about a card."

[0023]Fig.8 shows the exhibition screen displayed when it chooses "it is exhibition about a card" by the city menu screen (refer to Fig.7) of a chisel. If the "card identity number" which sends on the screen, and "a price to sell" are input, it will register with the server 5. In this procedure, the stock card list screen (refer to Fig.9 (a)) described next as choosing "a card being seen" of the screen is displayed to check a stock card. A price to sell the card which sends to can be decided by referring to the price of the below-mentioned price list screen (refer to Fig.12).

[0024]Fig.9 (a) shows the example of the stock card list screen displayed when it chooses "a card is seen" on an exhibition screen (refer to Fig.8). A card identity number list of a stock card is displayed, and if one of the requests is chosen from the list, the card detailed screen of the card identity number of Fig.9 (b) concerned will be displayed. The degree of rare is displayed by the number of asterisks in this screen.

[0025]Fig.10 is a category assigning screen displayed when it chooses "he buys a card" by the city menu screen (refer to Fig.7) of a chisel. The category is classified according to scarcity.

[0026]Fig.11 shows the example of the exhibition card list screen displayed when it specifies "this is new" in a category assigning screen (refer to Fig.10). What belongs to the category concerned among the cards sent now is displayed.

[0027]Fig.12 shows the example of the price list screen displayed when it is prodigal and the card of a metal is chosen in the exhibition card list screen (refer to Fig.11). The list display of the selling price of the card concerned sent now is carried out. When purchasing a card, one of the requests (what has a usually low price) is chosen from the list. It chooses "it returns", when stopping purchase.

[0028]It is the Fig.16 to Fig.13 which showed processing of "the city of a chisel" which is a summary of the present invention among above-mentioned game contents by the time chart.

Exhibition processing of a card is first described by Fig.13 and Fig.14. A first cellular phone will transmit the information to the server 5, if the i mode key is pressed (101). The server 5 receives the information, reads menu screen data in a hard disk, and transmits to a first cellular phone (102). A first cellular phone receives menu screen data from the server 5, and displays it on the display 18 (103). If "the city of a chisel" is chosen from the screen, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (104). The server 5 receives the information, reads the city menu screen data of a chisel in a hard disk, and transmits to a first cellular phone (105). A first cellular phone receives and displays the city menu screen data only from the server 5 (106). If "card exhibition" is chosen from the screen by operation of the key operation section 17, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (107). The server 5 receives card exhibition information, reads exhibition picture data from a hard disk, and transmits to a first cellular phone (108). A first cellular phone receives exhibition picture data,

and displays the screen (109). If "a card is seen" is chosen from the exhibition screen here, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (110). If the information on "seeing a card" is received, the server 5 will search the stock card of a first cellular phone from a hard disk (111), and will transmit stock card list screen data to the cellular phone (112). A first cellular phone receives the data and displays a stock card list screen (113). If a card number is chosen from the screen, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (114). The server 5 will search a card with the number from a hard disk, if a card identity number is received (115), it reads card detailed screen data from a hard disk, and transmits to a first cellular phone (116). A first cellular phone receives search results and displays a card detailed screen (117). Selection of it "returns" of the screen will transmit the information to the server 5 (118). If it receives "it returns", the server 5 will read exhibition picture data from a hard disk again, and will transmit to a first cellular phone (119). A first cellular phone receives and displays exhibition picture data (120). If a card number and a price to buy are input from the screen, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (121). The server 5 receives a card number and a price to buy, and stores them in a recording device (122).

[0029]Next, the processing which buys a card with Fig.15 and Fig.16 is described. A second cellular phone will transmit the information to the server 5, if the i mode key is pressed (201). The server 5 receives the information, reads menu screen data in a hard disk, and transmits to a second cellular phone (202). A second cellular phone receives menu screen data from the server 5, and displays it on the display 18 (203). If "the city of a chisel" is chosen from the screen, the information will be transmitted to the server 5 (204). The server 5 receives the information, reads the city menu screen data of a chisel in a hard disk, and transmits to a second cellular phone (205). A second cellular phone will transmit the information to the server 5, if "he buys a card" is chosen by the key operation of (206) and the key operation section 17 where the city menu screen of a chisel is displayed on the display 18 (207). The server 5 reads category assigning screen data from a hard disk, and transmits to a second cellular phone (208). A second cellular phone receives and displays category assigning screen data (209). Selection of a category of the key operation of the key operation section 17 will transmit the information to the server 5 (210). The server 5 receives the information, searches the exhibition card of the category from a hard disk (211), and transmits to a second cellular phone as exhibition card list screen data (212). A second cellular phone receives and displays the card list screen data (213). Selection of a card of the key operation of the key operation section 18 will transmit the information to the server 5 (214). The server 5 searches a price to receive the information and sell the card concerned to from a hard disk (215), and transmits to a second cellular phone as price list screen data (216). A second cellular phone receives and displays the price list screen data (217). Selection of a price of the key operation of the key operation section 18 will transmit the information to the server 5 (218). The server 5 receives the information and transmits the card data concerned to a second cellular phone (219). A second cellular phone receives the card data (220). The server 5 deletes the card data from a hard disk (221).

[0030]As described above, according to this example, the user who wants to sell a card registers with the server with the price to sell the card to, and the user who wants to buy it can obtain a desired card out of the card by which the list display was carried out according to the category.

[0031]It replaces with selling a card at a desired price, registers with a server with the card name which wishes to exchange, and may make it exchange with the user who owns the card concerned.

[0032]

[Effect of the Invention]According to the present invention, the technology which can deliver and receive the object acquired in the game in a portable telephone communication game system among many and unspecified users can be provided.

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JP,2001-259228,A

CLAIMS DETAILED DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS DRAWINGS

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1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
2. **** shows the word which can not be translated.
3. In the drawings, any words are not translated.

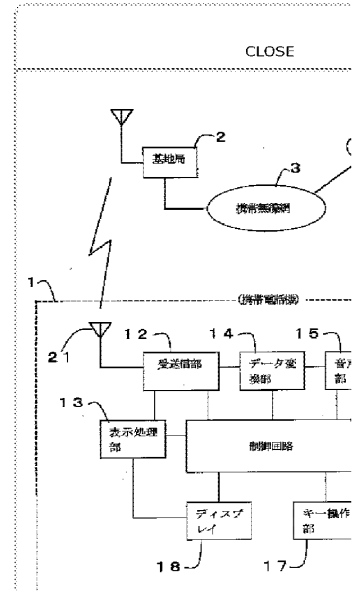
DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

- A [FIG. 1] The hardware organization figure of the present invention
- A [FIG. 2] The explanatory view for describing a menu screen
- A [FIG. 3] The explanatory view for describing a slot screen
- A [FIG. 4] The explanatory view for describing a field screen
- A [FIG. 5] The explanatory view for describing a battle screen
- A [FIG. 6] The explanatory view for describing a battle result screen
- A [FIG. 7] The explanatory view for describing the city menu screen of a chisel
- A [FIG. 8] The explanatory view for describing an exhibition screen
- A [FIG. 9] The explanatory view for describing a stock card list screen
- A [FIG. 10] The explanatory view for describing a category assigning screen
- A [FIG. 11] The explanatory view for describing an exhibition card list screen
- A [FIG. 12] The explanatory view for describing a price list screen
- A [FIG. 13] The time chart figure for describing an Example
- A [FIG. 14] The time chart figure for describing an Example
- A [FIG. 15] The time chart figure for describing an Example
- A [FIG. 16] The time chart figure for describing an Example

[Explanations of letters or numerals]

- 1 Cellular phone
- 2 Base station
- 3 Portable telephone network
- 4 Internet
- 5 Server
- 17 Key operation section
- 18 Display
- 31 Player character



Representative drawing

Representative drawing

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[Translation done.]

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	14409219				
Filing Date:	18-Dec-2014				
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM				
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa				
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum				
Attorney Docket Number:	163485				
Filed as Large Entity					
Filing Fees for U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371					
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)	
Basic Filing:					
Pages:					
Claims:					
Miscellaneous-Filing:					
Petition:					
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:					
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:					
Extension-of-Time:					

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Miscellaneous:				
SUBMISSION- INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STMT	1806	1	240	240
Total in USD (\$)				240

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	33152827
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	11-JUL-2018
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	17:40:52
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

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Warnings:					
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2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	Information_Disclosure_Statement_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1034527 2d29f6065fd7822fbb141b8276bce0f9c4fc3961	no	4
Warnings:					
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3	Foreign Reference	R019_JP2001218981A.PDF	703014 46c60bb2486aa0587c9700f173edac32d208dac9	no	14
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11	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	31003	no	2
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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: 3716
For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM	Examiner: J. S. McClellan

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT WITH 30-DAY CERTIFICATION

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Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed more than three months after the U.S. filing date and after the mailing date of a Final Rejection, Notice of Allowance, or other action that closes prosecution (e.g., Quayle Action), but on or before payment of the Issue Fee. The fees associated with this filing under 37 C.F.R. §1.17(p) are being paid electronically with this filing. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee (or credit any overpayment) associated for this filing to Deposit Account No. 15-0461.
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Foreign Cite No	Abstract Provided	Discussed in	Discussed in	Corresponds to
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Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: / B. Graham Nelson /
 James A. Oliff
 Registration No.: 27,075
 B. Graham Nelson
 Registration No.: 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: July 11, 2018

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ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850

EXAMINER

MCCLELLAN, JAMES S

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3716

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2018

Table with 5 columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219 12/18/2014 Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa 163485 7235

TITLE OF INVENTION: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

Table with 7 columns: APPLN. TYPE, ENTITY STATUS, ISSUE FEE DUE, PUBLICATION FEE DUE, PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE, TOTAL FEE(S) DUE, DATE DUE
nonprovisional UNDISCOUNTED \$1000 \$0 \$0 \$1000 08/27/2018

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THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

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III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

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_____ (Signature)
_____ (Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsu Yoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235

TITLE OF INVENTION: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

APPLN. TYPE	ENTITY STATUS	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	UNDISCOUNTED	\$1000	\$0	\$0	\$1000	08/27/2018

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	3716	463-042000

<p>1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a Customer Number is required.</p>	<p>2. For printing on the patent front page, list</p> <p>(1) The names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, _____ 1</p> <p>(2) The name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. _____ 2</p> <p>_____ 3</p>
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3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

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(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE _____ (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY) _____

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent) : Individual Corporation or other private group entity Government

<p>4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Issue Fee</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Advance Order - # of Copies _____</p>	<p>4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A check is enclosed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credits any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).</p>
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5. **Change in Entity Status** (from status indicated above)

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Applicant changing to regular undiscounted fee status.

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NOTE: Checking this box will be taken to be a notification of loss of entitlement to small or micro entity status, as applicable.

NOTE: This form must be signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.31 and 1.33. See 37 CFR 1.4 for signature requirements and certifications.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____

Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____



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Table with 5 columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO. Includes details for application 14/409,219 filed 12/18/2014 by Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa, attorney OLIFF PLC, examiner MCCLELLAN, JAMES S, art unit 3716, and date mailed 05/25/2018.

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)

(Applications filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Office has discontinued providing a Patent Term Adjustment (PTA) calculation with the Notice of Allowance.

Section 1(h)(2) of the AIA Technical Corrections Act amended 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(3)(B)(i) to eliminate the requirement that the Office provide a patent term adjustment determination with the notice of allowance. See Revisions to Patent Term Adjustment, 78 Fed. Reg. 19416, 19417 (Apr. 1, 2013). Therefore, the Office is no longer providing an initial patent term adjustment determination with the notice of allowance. The Office will continue to provide a patent term adjustment determination with the Issue Notification Letter that is mailed to applicant approximately three weeks prior to the issue date of the patent, and will include the patent term adjustment on the patent. Any request for reconsideration of the patent term adjustment determination (or reinstatement of patent term adjustment) should follow the process outlined in 37 CFR 1.705.

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

OMB Clearance and PRA Burden Statement for PTOL-85 Part B

The Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 requires Federal agencies to obtain Office of Management and Budget approval before requesting most types of information from the public. When OMB approves an agency request to collect information from the public, OMB (i) provides a valid OMB Control Number and expiration date for the agency to display on the instrument that will be used to collect the information and (ii) requires the agency to inform the public about the OMB Control Number's legal significance in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.5(b).

The information collected by PTOL-85 Part B is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether disclosure of these records is required by the Freedom of Information Act.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspection or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Notice of Allowability	Application No. 14/409,219	Applicant(s) YOSHIKAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner JAMES S. MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716	AIA (First Inventor to File) Status No

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to an amendment on 4/26/2018.
 A declaration(s)/affidavit(s) under **37 CFR 1.130(b)** was/were filed on _____.
2. An election was made by the applicant in response to a restriction requirement set forth during the interview on _____; the restriction requirement and election have been incorporated into this action.
3. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,6 and 11. As a result of the allowed claim(s), you may be eligible to benefit from the **Patent Prosecution Highway** program at a participating intellectual property office for the corresponding application. For more information, please see http://www.uspto.gov/patents/init_events/pph/index.jsp or send an inquiry to PPHfeedback@uspto.gov.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

Certified copies:

- a) All b) Some *c) None of the:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * Certified copies not received: _____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Issue Classification 	Application/Control No. 14409219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner JAMES S MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716

CPC					
Symbol				Type	Version
A63F	13		69	F	2014-09-02
A63F	2300		575	A	2013-01-01
A63F	2300		609	A	2013-01-01
A63F	13		35	I	2014-09-02
A63F	13		79	A	2014-09-02

CPC Combination Sets					
Symbol		Type	Set	Ranking	Version


NONE		Total Claims Allowed:	
(Assistant Examiner)	(Date)	3	
/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner.Art Unit 3716	05/14/2018	O.G. Print Claim(s)	O.G. Print Figure
(Primary Examiner)	(Date)	1	5


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BIB DATA SHEET
CONFIRMATION NO. 7235

SERIAL NUMBER	FILING or 371(c) DATE RULE	CLASS	GROUP ART UNIT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.		
14/409,219	12/18/2014	463	3716	163485		
APPLICANTS GREE, INC., Minato-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN INVENTORS Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa, Minato-ku, JAPAN; Tomohiro Tsukihara, Minato-ku, JAPAN; Norikazu Kato, Minato-ku, JAPAN; Tomoki Yasuhara, Minato-ku, JAPAN; ** CONTINUING DATA ***** This application is a 371 of PCT/JP2013/003899 06/21/2013 ** FOREIGN APPLICATIONS ***** JAPAN 2012-140213 06/21/2012 ** IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED ** 03/05/2015						
Foreign Priority claimed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	35 USC 119(a-d) conditions met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Met after Allowance	STATE OR COUNTRY JAPAN	SHEETS DRAWINGS 10	TOTAL CLAIMS 15	INDEPENDENT CLAIMS 3
Verified and /JAMES S MCCLELLAN/	Examiner's Signature	Initials				
ADDRESS OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850 UNITED STATES						
TITLE GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM						
FILING FEE RECEIVED 1620	FEES: Authority has been given in Paper No. _____ to charge/credit DEPOSIT ACCOUNT No. _____ for following:			<input type="checkbox"/> All Fees <input type="checkbox"/> 1.16 Fees (Filing) <input type="checkbox"/> 1.17 Fees (Processing Ext. of time) <input type="checkbox"/> 1.18 Fees (Issue) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Credit		

Search Notes 	Application/Control No. 14409219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner JAMES S MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716

CPC- SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner
A63 F 13/30, 55, 67, 69, 79, and 798	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM
Update Search	2/5/2017	JSM
Update Search	5/14/2018	JSM

CPC COMBINATION SETS - SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner

US CLASSIFICATION SEARCHED			
Class	Subclass	Date	Examiner

* See search history printout included with this form or the SEARCH NOTES box below to determine the scope of the search.

SEARCH NOTES		
Search Notes	Date	Examiner
EAST Text Search	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM
Update Search	2/5/2017	JSM
Update Search	4/26/2018	JSM
Update Search	5/14/2018	JSM
Claim Term Search for Interference	5/14/2018	JSM

INTERFERENCE SEARCH			
US Class/ CPC Symbol	US Subclass / CPC Group	Date	Examiner

	/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner.Art Unit 3716
--	-------------------------------------------------------

INTERFERENCE SEARCH

US Class/ CPC Symbol	US Subclass / CPC Group	Date	Examiner
A63F	13/30, 55, 67, 69, 79, and 798	5/14/2018	JSM

	/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner.Art Unit 3716
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EAST Search History

EAST Search History (Prior Art)

Ref #	Hits	Search Query	DBs	Default Operator	Plurals	Time Stamp
L1	112301	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L2	7165320	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L3	197774	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L4	55	L1 with L2 with L3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L5	565075	randomly	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L6	198	rarity adj value	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L7	5619	virtual adj game	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
L8	0	5 with 6 with 7	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/05/14 14:38
S1	93663	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S2	6567737	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S3	176873	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S4	42	S1 with S2 with S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S5	9326423	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S6	25	S5 and S4	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S7	1	("20140038716").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; USOCR	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S8	3	("20040259642" "20050282634" "20090124393").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S9	3	S8 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S10	8	("2005/0282634").URPN.	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S11	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:06
S12	3975	a63f13/30,55,67,69,79,798.cpc.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S13	3545	S2 and S12	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S14	524	S13 and S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03

EAST Search History

S15	280	S14 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03
S16	101490	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S17	6819081	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S18	185308	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S19	47	S16 with S17 with S18	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S20	9350455	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S21	25	S20 and S19	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S22	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/02/02 14:40
S23	25	"409,219"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/02/02 14:41

5/ 14/ 2018 2:38:54 PM

C:\ Users\ jmcclellan\ Documents\ EAST\ Workspaces\ 14409219.wsp

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3716

Application No.: 14/409,219

Examiner: J. MCCLELLAN

Filed: December 18, 2014

Docket No.: 163485

For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

In reply to the February 9, 2018 Office Action, please consider the following:

Amendments to the Claims as reflected in the listing of claims; and

Remarks.

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A game control method comprising the steps of:

(a) initializing a virtual game;

~~(a)(b) displaying, during the virtual game, a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table, and at least one of the cells including a character which indicates a rarity value of an item associated with the at least one of the cellseontaining an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count;~~

~~(b)(c) receiving, during the virtual game, a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server; and~~

~~(c)(d) displaying, during the virtual game, an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.~~

2-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A computer comprising:

a controller configured to initialize a virtual game; and

a display configured to display, during the virtual game, a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item

information table, and at least one of the cells including a character which indicates a rarity value of an item associated with the at least one of the cells~~containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count; and, wherein~~

~~a~~the controller is configured to (i) receive, during the virtual game, a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells, and (ii) send, during the virtual game, the selection request to the server, wherein the display displays an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.

7-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer readable recording medium having stored thereon instructions to be executed on a computer, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:

(a) initializing a virtual game;

~~(b)~~(a) displaying, during the virtual game, a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table, and at least one of the cells including a character which indicates a rarity value of an item associated with the at least one of the cells~~containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count;~~

~~(c)~~(b) receiving, during the virtual game, a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server; and

~~(d)~~(e) displaying, during the virtual game, an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.

12-15. (Canceled)

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6 and 11 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6 and 11 are amended, and claims 2-4, 7-9 and 12-14 are canceled. No new matter is added.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner McClellan at the interview held April 17, 2018, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being patent-ineligible within the *Alice* framework. In response, as discussed during the interview, independent claims 1, 6 and 11 are amended to recite the initial step of initializing a virtual game, and clarify that the steps (b), (c) and (d) are performed during the virtual game. The claims are further amended to recite the feature of "at least one of the cells including a character which indicates a rarity value of an item associated with the at least one of the cells." This feature may be understood with reference to the publication of this application, with paragraph [0089] disclosing that each cell may have a "character" in lieu of the "pattern" in accordance with the "item type" as in paragraph [0087], and paragraph [0040] describing the "item type" as representing the rarity value.

During the interview, it was agreed that these additional features, in combination with the remaining limitations of the independent claims, represent "significantly more" than the abstract idea of inventory management. As discussed, the claims do not read on a simple "scratch-off" lottery-type card that has hints. Also, as discussed in the March 30, 2017 Amendment, the claimed features are directed to a specific improvement in the field of gaming. Thus, in keeping with the case law applying the *Alice* framework, independent claims 1, 6 and 11 are directed to patent-eligible subject matter under 35 U.S.C. §101, as agreed upon during the interview. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112(a). As discussed during the interview, the limitation at issue is removed from the claims, thus mooting the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

/ B. Graham Nelson /

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

B. Graham Nelson
Registration No. 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: April 26, 2018

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	32458204
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	26-APR-2018
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	17:03:35
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1		20180426_Amendment.pdf	29417 32442f5ed051ef1a1ae5aed3e112597cf01bee3	yes	5

Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description			
	Document Description	Start	End
	Amendment/Req. Reconsideration-After Non-Final Reject	1	1
	Claims	2	3
	Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment	4	5
Warnings:			
Information:			
Total Files Size (in bytes):		29417	
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>			

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PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 14/409,219	Filing Date 12/18/2014	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------------

ENTITY: LARGE SMALL MICRO

APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)		RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(k), (j), or (m))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	minus 20 =	*	X \$	=	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	minus 3 =	*	X \$	=	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).				
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.			TOTAL		

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT	04/26/2018	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	* 3	Minus	** 20	= 0	X \$100 = 0
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	* 3	Minus	***3	= 0	X \$460 = 0
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT		CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	*	Minus	**	=	X \$ =
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	*	Minus	***	=	X \$ =
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

LIE
DEBORAH POLLARD

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	02/09/2018	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			02/09/2018	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's Submission of an RCE

1. Applicant's submission of an RCE on 12/22/2017 seeking entry of a previously non-entered amendment dated 11/22/2017 has been received and fully considered. In the response, claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter because the claim(s) as a whole, considering all claim elements both individually and in combination, do not amount to significantly more than an abstract idea (one of the three judicial exceptions).

In this case, the claim(s) is/are directed to the abstract idea of inventory management, which is described in the claim(s). The following subject matter in the claim(s) describes the above identified abstract idea even though not expressly recited: acquiring item information and changing acquirable item information. Further, the above identified abstract idea is similar to concepts that have been identified as abstract by the courts, including:

Precedential Cases:

- Collecting and comparing known information in Classen Immunotherapies;
- Organizing information through mathematical correlations in Digitech;
- Data recognition or storage in Content Extraction;

Non-Precedential Cases:

- Managing a Game of Bingo in Planet Bingo;
- Allowing players to purchase additional objects during a game in Gametek;
- Comparing new and stored information and using rules to identify options in SmartGene;

In contrast to McRo v. Bandai Namco Games America, the current claims, when considered as a whole, do not appear to describe a specific way to solve a problem, but appear to merely claim the idea of a solution or outcome. The McRo court relied on an explanation in the specification that described how the claimed rules enabled a computer to improve an existing technological process, unlike cases where a computer was merely used as a tool to perform an existing process (e.g., as in Alice). For these reasons, the current claims are directed to an abstract idea.

The additional element(s) or combination of elements in the claim(s) other than the abstract idea when considered as a whole do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea. For example, the following additional recited claim feature(s) related to computing

amount to little more than the use of a general purpose computer, which has been held by the courts in Alice to not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea:

- Information presentation means (display);
- Control means; and
- Game server.

In BASCOM v. AT&T Mobility, the court held that the recited generic computer, network, and Internet components did not amount to significantly more than the underlying abstract, but explained that the non-conventional and non-generic arrangement of additional elements when considered in combination may amount to significantly more. In this case, the claim(s) recites the following limitation(s) or feature(s) that may extend beyond the identified abstract idea but do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea because they are well-understood, routine, conventional activities (Mayo) to those in the gaming field:

- The inventoried items are game items; and
- Displaying game item data in cells
- Randomly selecting items from a list

Viewed as a whole, the additional claim element(s) do not provide meaningful limitations to transform the abstract idea into a patent eligible application of the abstract idea such that the claim(s) amounts to significantly more than the abstract idea itself. See Alice Corp. v. CLS Bank Int'l, 110 USPQ2d 1976 (U.S. 2014). Therefore, the claim(s) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112(a):

(a) IN GENERAL.—The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same, and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor or joint inventor of carrying out the invention.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same, and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

5. Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(a) or 35 U.S.C. 112 (pre-AIA), first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor or a joint inventor, or for pre-AIA the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended to include the following recited claim feature that does not appear to have support in the disclosure: “and at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count.” On page 6 of Applicant's REMARKS, Applicant anticipated that his may be an issued and cited support in "Figures 9, 10A, and 10B, and the associated written description such as paragraph [0084] of the publication." The Examiner reviewed Figs. 9, 10A, 10, and the associated written description

such as paragraph [0084] of the publication. The Examiner was unable to find support for “and at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count.” While the recited scenario seems like it naturally likely occur, it does not appear that Applicant had appreciated this feature based on the support cited by Applicant and the recited feature does not appear to be necessarily present. Additionally, the Examiner searched for the term "highest" (as recited in the new claim features) in the disclosure and was not able to locate any hits. While the Examiner understands that it is possible to have support without using the same terminology in both the claims and specification, the Examiner's review of the relevant sections also did not appear to support the newly recited claim features. Correction or clarification is required.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed on 11/22/2017 have been fully considered but they are not fully persuasive.

On page 7, Applicant argues that the claims recite significantly more than the underlying abstract idea. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Applicant points to the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count as significantly more. It is the Examiner's position that 1.) the new limitation is not supported by the original disclosure and 2.) that if it were supported, this limitation would be well-understood, routine, and conventional. That is, the result of the newly added limitation from the perspective of the game player is at least one cell contains an item that, if selected, could actually help the player. A game would not be very fun for the player if there was no possible selection that could be helpful

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to the player. Of course a game producer would give the player at least some chance for success (even if only the odds were only 1/25). Therefore, the newly added feature, even if supported, does not appear to be enough to be “significantly more.” Therefore, the listed features are not significantly more.

Conclusion


6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES S. MCCLELLAN whose telephone number is (571)272-7167. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30AM-5:00PM).

Examiner interviews are available via telephone, in-person, and video conferencing using a USPTO supplied web-based collaboration tool. To schedule an interview, applicant is encouraged to use the USPTO Automated Interview Request (AIR) at <http://www.uspto.gov/interviewpractice>.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Dmitry Suhol can be reached on (571) 272-4430. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Search Notes 	Application/Control No. 14409219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner JAMES S MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716

CPC- SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner
A63 F 13/30, 55, 67, 69, 79, and 798	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM
Update Search	2/5/2017	JSM

CPC COMBINATION SETS - SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner

US CLASSIFICATION SEARCHED			
Class	Subclass	Date	Examiner

* See search history printout included with this form or the SEARCH NOTES box below to determine the scope of the search.

SEARCH NOTES		
Search Notes	Date	Examiner
EAST Text Search	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM
Update Search	2/5/2017	JSM

INTERFERENCE SEARCH			
US Class/ CPC Symbol	US Subclass / CPC Group	Date	Examiner

	/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner.Art Unit 3716
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EAST Search History

EAST Search History (Prior Art)

Ref #	Hits	Search Query	DBs	Default Operator	Plurals	Time Stamp
S1	93663	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S2	6567737	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S3	176873	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S4	42	S1 with S2 with S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S5	9326423	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S6	25	S5 and S4	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S7	1	("20140038716").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; USOCR	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S8	3	("20040259642" "20050282634" "20090124393").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S9	3	S8 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S10	8	("2005/0282634").URPN.	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S11	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:06
S12	3975	a63f13/30,55,67,69,79,798.cpc.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S13	3545	S2 and S12	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S14	524	S13 and S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03
S15	280	S14 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03
S16	101490	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S17	6819081	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S18	185308	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S19	47	S16 with S17 with S18	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S20	9350455	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S21	25	S20 and S19	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S22	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/02/02 14:40

EAST Search History

S23	25	"409,219"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2018/02/02 14:41
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2/ 5/ 2018 9:18:15 AM

C:\ Users\ jmcclellan\ Documents\ EAST\ Workspaces\ 14409219.wsp

REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION(RCE)TRANSMITTAL (Submitted Only via EFS-Web)							
Application Number	14409219	Filing Date	2014-12-18	Docket Number (if applicable)	163485	Art Unit	3716
First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA			Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan		
<p>This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114 of the above-identified application. Request for Continued Examination (RCE) practice under 37 CFR 1.114 does not apply to any utility or plant application filed prior to June 8, 1995, to any international application that does not comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 371, or to any design application. The Instruction Sheet for this form is located at WWW.USPTO.GOV.</p>							
SUBMISSION REQUIRED UNDER 37 CFR 1.114							
<p>Note: If the RCE is proper, any previously filed unentered amendments and amendments enclosed with the RCE will be entered in the order in which they were filed unless applicant instructs otherwise. If applicant does not wish to have any previously filed unentered amendment(s) entered, applicant must request non-entry of such amendment(s).</p>							
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Previously submitted. If a final Office action is outstanding, any amendments filed after the final Office action may be considered as a submission even if this box is not checked.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Consider the arguments in the Appeal Brief or Reply Brief previously filed on _____</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Amendment After Final Rejection filed on November 22, 2017.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/Reply</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Affidavit(s)/ Declaration(s)</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>							
MISCELLANEOUS							
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Suspension of action on the above-identified application is requested under 37 CFR 1.103(c) for a period of months _____ (Period of suspension shall not exceed 3 months; Fee under 37 CFR 1.17(i) required)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>							
FEES							
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The RCE fee under 37 CFR 1.17(e) is required by 37 CFR 1.114 when the RCE is filed. The Director is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees, or credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No 15-0461</p>							
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED							
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent Practitioner Signature</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Applicant Signature</p>							

Doc code: RCEX

Doc description: Request for Continued Examination (RCE)

PTO/SB/30EFS (07-14)

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Signature	B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-12-22
Name	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72699

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2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME UNDER 37 CFR 1.136(a)		Docket Number (Optional) 163485																																					
Application Number 14/409,219		Filed December 18, 2014																																					
For GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM																																							
Art Unit 3716		Examiner J. S. McClellan																																					
<p>This is a request under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) to extend the period for filing a reply in the above-identified application.</p> <p>The requested extension and fee are as follows (check time period desired and enter the appropriate fee below):</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 5%;"></th> <th style="width: 45%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: center;"><u>Fee</u></th> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: center;"><u>Small Entity Fee</u></th> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: center;"><u>Micro Entity Fee</u></th> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>One month (37 CFR 1.17(a)(1))</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$200</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$50</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 200.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Two months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(2))</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$600</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$300</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$150</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Three months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(3))</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$1,400</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$700</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$350</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Four months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(4))</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$2,200</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$1,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$550</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Five months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(5))</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$3,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$1,500</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$750</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ _____</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant asserts small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant certifies micro entity status. See 37 CFR 1.29. Form PTO/SB/15A or B or equivalent must either be enclosed or have been submitted previously.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of the fee is enclosed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Director has already been authorized to charge fees in this application to a Deposit Account.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number <u>15-0461</u>.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payment made via EFS-Web.</p> <p>WARNING: Information on this form may become public. Credit card information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.</p> <p>I am the</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> applicant.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> attorney or agent of record. Registration number _____.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> attorney or agent acting under 37 CFR 1.34. Registration number <u>72,699</u>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____/ B. Graham Nelson /_____ Signature</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____/ December 22, 2017 /_____ Date</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____/ B. Graham Nelson /_____ Typed or printed name</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____/ (703) 836-6400 /_____ Telephone Number</p> <p>NOTE: This form must be signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.33. See 37 CFR 1.4 for signature requirements and certifications. Submit multiple forms if more than one signature is required, see below*.</p>						<u>Fee</u>	<u>Small Entity Fee</u>	<u>Micro Entity Fee</u>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	One month (37 CFR 1.17(a)(1))	\$200	\$100	\$50	\$ 200.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Two months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(2))	\$600	\$300	\$150	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Three months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(3))	\$1,400	\$700	\$350	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Four months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(4))	\$2,200	\$1,100	\$550	\$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Five months (37 CFR 1.17(a)(5))	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$750	\$ _____
		<u>Fee</u>	<u>Small Entity Fee</u>	<u>Micro Entity Fee</u>																																			
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> * Total of <u>1</u> forms are submitted.</p>																																							

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	14409219				
Filing Date:	18-Dec-2014				
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM				
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa				
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum				
Attorney Docket Number:	163485				
Filed as Large Entity					
Filing Fees for U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371					
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)	
Basic Filing:					
Pages:					
Claims:					
Miscellaneous-Filing:					
Petition:					
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:					
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:					
Extension-of-Time:					

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Extension - 1 month with \$0 paid	1251	1	200	200
Miscellaneous:				
RCE- 1st Request	1801	1	1200	1200
Total in USD (\$)				1400

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	31322044
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	22-DEC-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	14:16:18
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	DA
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$1400
RAM confirmation Number	122617INTEFSW00004654150461
Deposit Account	
Authorized User	

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Request for Continued Examination (RCE)	Request_for_Continued_Examination_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1349847 feab5bedd79235a88311f9c475017684b9143d1d	no	3

Warnings:

Information:

2	Extension of Time	One_Month_Request_for_Extension_of_Time_Under_37_CFR_1136a.pdf	22778 c01c6e97b6ae88bbce3063bd1f36a859a82ae049	no	1
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Warnings:

Information:

3	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	32756 d2f141d4751d47ea642fbde29249fb15ab6af5ae	no	2
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Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes):	1405381
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This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 14/409,219	Filing Date 12/18/2014	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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ENTITY: LARGE SMALL MICRO

APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)		RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA			
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE (37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE (37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(i))	minus 20 =	*	X \$	=	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(h))	minus 3 =	*	X \$	=	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE (37 CFR 1.16(s))	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).				
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.				TOTAL	

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT	12/22/2017	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	* 12	Minus	** 20	=	0
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	* 3	Minus	***3	=	0
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0	

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT		CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus	**	=	
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus	***	=	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE		

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

LIE
DEANNA RORIE

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
 If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
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Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	12/18/2017	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/18/2017	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com

Advisory Action Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief	Application No. 14/409,219	Applicant(s) YOSHIKAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner JAMES S. MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716	AIA (First Inventor to File) Status No

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 22 November 2017 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.
NO NOTICE OF APPEAL FILED

1. The reply was filed after a final rejection. No Notice of Appeal has been filed. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114 if this is a utility or plant application. Note that RCEs are not permitted in design applications. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

a) The period for reply expires 3 months from the mailing date of the final rejection.

b) The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action; or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

c) A prior Advisory Action was mailed more than 3 months after the mailing date of the final rejection in response to a first after-final reply filed within 2 months of the mailing date of the final rejection. The current period for reply expires _____ months from the mailing date of the prior Advisory Action or SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection, whichever is earlier.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a), (b) or (c). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THIS ADVISORY ACTION IS THE FIRST RESPONSE TO APPLICANT'S FIRST AFTER-FINAL REPLY WHICH WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. ONLY CHECK BOX (c) IN THE LIMITED SITUATION SET FORTH UNDER BOX (c). See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) or (c) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. The proposed amendments filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because

a) They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);

b) They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);

c) They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or

d) They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: See Continuation Sheet. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).

5. Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.

6. Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).

7. For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): (a) will not be entered, or (b) will be entered, and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. A declaration(s)/affidavit(s) under **37 CFR 1.130(b)** was/were filed on _____.

9. The affidavit or other evidence filed after final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).

10. The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing the Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).

11. The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

12. The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: _____.

13. Note the attached Information *Disclosure Statement*(s). (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s). _____

14. Other: _____.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

15. The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: _____

Claim(s) objected to: _____

Claim(s) rejected: 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14.

Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Continuation of 3. NOTE: Claims 1, 6, and 11 have been amended to recite features that have not yet been considered and would require further search and consideration, including: at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count.

DO NOT ENTER: /JSM/

PATENT APPLICATION

**RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR §1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE
TECHNOLOGY CENTER ART UNIT 3716**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3716

Application No.: 14/409,219

Examiner: J. MCCLELLAN

Filed: December 18, 2014

Docket No.: 163485

For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL REJECTION UNDER 37 CFR §1.116

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

In reply to the August 25, 2017 Office Action, please consider the following:

Amendments to the Claims as reflected in the listing of claims; and

Remarks.

PATENT APPLICATION

**RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR §1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE
TECHNOLOGY CENTER ART UNIT 3716**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3716

Application No.: 14/409,219

Examiner: J. MCCLELLAN

Filed: December 18, 2014

Docket No.: 163485

For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL REJECTION UNDER 37 CFR §1.116

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

In reply to the August 25, 2017 Office Action, please consider the following:

Amendments to the Claims as reflected in the listing of claims; and

Remarks.

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A game control method comprising the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table, and at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count;

(b) receiving a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server; and

(c) displaying an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.

2. (Previously Presented) The game control method according to claim 1, further comprising:

(d) displaying the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells.

3. (Previously Presented) The game control method according to claim 1, wherein

in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

4. (Previously Presented) The game control method according to claim 2, wherein

in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A computer comprising:

a display configured to display a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table, and at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count; and

a controller configured to (i) receive a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells, and (ii) send the selection request to the server, wherein the display displays an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.

7. (Previously Presented) The computer according to claim 6, wherein the display displays the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells.

8. (Previously Presented) The computer according to claim 6, wherein the display displays each of the plurality of cells with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

9. (Previously Presented) The computer according to claim 7, wherein the display displays each of the plurality of cells with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer readable recording medium having stored thereon instructions to be executed on a computer, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table, and at least one of the cells containing an item type for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count;

(b) receiving a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server; and

(c) displaying an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request.

12. (Previously Presented) The non-transitory computer readable recording medium according to claim 11, wherein the instructions cause the computer to further perform the step of:

(d) displaying the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells.

13. (Previously Presented) The non-transitory computer readable recording medium according to claim 11, wherein

in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

14. (Previously Presented) The non-transitory computer readable recording medium according to claim 12, wherein

in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

15. (Canceled)

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 6 and 11 are amended. No new matter is added. Support for the claim amendments can be found in Figures 9, 10A and 10B, and the associated written description such as paragraph [0084] of the publication.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner McClellan at the interview held October 12, 2017, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter based on the Supreme Court's decision in *Alice Corp. Pty. Ltd. v. CLS Bank Int'l.*¹ ("*CLS Bank*"). In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

As discussed during the interview, independent claims 1, 6 and 11 are amended to recite "significantly more" than the alleged abstract idea of "inventory management." During the interview, it was agreed that *tilting the deck* in favor of rarer items or more desirable items is likely to be such an unconventional feature that provides the sought-after "significantly more" and transforms the abstract idea into a patent-eligible application. Thus, the independent claims are amended to recite "at least one of the cells containing an item *type* for which the user *does not have the highest acquisition count.*" In other words, the cells of the "scratch cards" of Figures 9, 10A and 10B are populated so as to include an item *type* for which the user does not have the highest acquisition count.

As discussed during the interview, this feature of tilting the deck in favor of rarer items or more desirable items is not routine or conventional. Furthermore, this feature

¹ Appeal No. 13-298, 573 U.S. ____ (2014).

represents "significantly more" than the abstract idea of inventory management. Finally, as discussed in the March 30, 2017 Amendment, the claimed features are directed to a specific improvement in the field of gaming. Thus, in keeping with the case law applying the *Alice* framework, independent claims 1, 6 and 11 are directed to patent-eligible subject matter under 35 U.S.C. §101. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

/ B. Graham Nelson /

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

B. Graham Nelson
Registration No. 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: November 22, 2017

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	31032676
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	22-NOV-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	15:57:34
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1		2017_1122__AAFR.pdf	38370 9e05fa43cbafe01241fc5fccd6bee1e5c4277ac5	yes	7

Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description			
Document Description	Start	End	
Response After Final Action	1	1	
Claims	2	5	
Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment	6	7	
Warnings:			
Information:			
Total Files Size (in bytes):		38370	
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>			

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PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 14/409,219	Filing Date 12/18/2014	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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ENTITY: LARGE SMALL MICRO

APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I

FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA		RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE (37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE (37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(i))	minus 20 =	*		X \$ =	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(h))	minus 3 =	*		X \$ =	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE (37 CFR 1.16(s))	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).				
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.				TOTAL	

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT	11/22/2017	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	* 12	Minus	** 20	= 0	X \$80 = 0
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	* 3	Minus	***3	= 0	X \$420 = 0
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT		CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus	**	=	X \$ =
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus	***	=	X \$ =
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

LIE
/RUBY JOHNSON/

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	08/25/2017	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			08/25/2017	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com

DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's Submission of a Response

1. Applicant's submission of a response on 3/30/2017 has been received and fully considered. In the response, claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 have been amended; and claims 5, 10, and 15 have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter because the claim(s) as a whole, considering all claim elements both individually and in combination, do not amount to significantly more than an abstract idea (one of the three judicial exceptions).

In this case, the claim(s) is/are directed to the abstract idea of inventory management, which is described in the claim(s). The following subject matter in the claim(s) describes the above identified abstract idea even though not expressly recited: acquiring item information and changing acquirable item information. Further, the above identified abstract idea is similar to concepts that have been identified as abstract by the courts, including:

Art Unit: 3716

Precedential Cases:

- Collecting and comparing known information in *Classen Immunotherapies*;
- Organizing information through mathematical correlations in *Digitech*;
- Data recognition or storage in *Content Extraction*;

Non-Precedential Cases:

- Managing a Game of Bingo in *Planet Bingo*;
- Allowing players to purchase additional objects during a game in *Gametek*;
- Comparing new and stored information and using rules to identify options in *SmartGene*;

In contrast to *McRo v. Bandai Namco Games America*, the current claims, when considered as a whole, do not appear to describe a specific way to solve a problem, but appear to merely claim the idea of a solution or outcome. The *McRo* court relied on an explanation in the specification that described how the claimed rules enabled a computer to improve an existing technological process, unlike cases where a computer was merely used as a tool to perform an existing process (e.g., as in *Alice*). For these reasons, the current claims are directed to an abstract idea.

The additional element(s) or combination of elements in the claim(s) other than the abstract idea when considered as a whole do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea. For example, the following additional recited claim feature(s) related to computing

amount to little more than the use of a general purpose computer, which has been held by the courts in Alice to not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea:

- Information presentation means (display);
- Control means; and
- Game server.

In BASCOM v. AT&T Mobility, the court held that the recited generic computer, network, and Internet components did not amount to significantly more than the underlying abstract, but explained that the non-conventional and non-generic arrangement of additional elements when considered in combination may amount to significantly more. In this case, the claim(s) recites the following limitation(s) or feature(s) that may extend beyond the identified abstract idea but do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea because they are well-understood, routine, conventional activities (Mayo) to those in the gaming field:

- The inventoried items are game items; and
- Displaying game item data in cells
- Randomly selecting items from a list

Viewed as a whole, the additional claim element(s) do not provide meaningful limitations to transform the abstract idea into a patent eligible application of the abstract idea such that the claim(s) amounts to significantly more than the abstract idea itself. See Alice Corp. v. CLS Bank Int'l, 110 USPQ2d 1976 (U.S. 2014). Therefore, the claim(s) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed on 3/30/2017 have been fully considered but they are not fully persuasive.

On page 7, Applicant argues that the claims recite significantly more than the underlying abstract idea. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Applicant points to the cells being the same size (which is well-understood, routine, and conventional); items extracted from a table (which is well-understood, routine, and conventional); associating an item with a cell (which is well-understood, routine, and conventional); randomly selecting an item (which is well-understood, routine, and conventional). None of the recited features are anything but well-understood, routine and conventional. Therefore, the listed features are not significantly more.

On page 8, Applicant argues that the current claims are eligible for reasons similar to claims in the *McRO* decision. The Examiner respectfully disagrees. In contrast to *McRo v. Bandai Namco Games America*, the current claims, when considered as a whole, do not appear to describe a specific way to solve a problem, but appear to merely claim the idea of a solution or outcome. The *McRo* court relied on an explanation in the specification that described how the claimed rules enabled a computer to improve an existing technological process, unlike cases where a computer was merely used as a tool to perform an existing process (e.g., as in *Alice*). For these reasons, the current claims are directed to an abstract idea.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES S. MCCLELLAN whose telephone number is (571)272-7167. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30AM-5:00PM).

Examiner interviews are available via telephone, in-person, and video conferencing using a USPTO supplied web-based collaboration tool. To schedule an interview, applicant is encouraged to use the USPTO Automated Interview Request (AIR) at <http://www.uspto.gov/interviewpractice>.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dmitry Suhol can be reached on (571) 272-4430. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Receipt date: 06/19/2017

14409219 - GAU: 3716

Doc code: IDS

Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

PTO/SB/08a (03-15)
 Approved for use through 07/31/2016. OMB 0651-0031
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
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	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

/JSM/	1	May 9, 2017 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
/JSM/	2	Saka Tsuku DS Touch and Direct Perfect Guide, ENTERBRAIN, INC., First Version, pp. 74-76, January 8, 2009.	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	/James S. McClellan/	Date Considered	07/10/2017
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

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	Filing Date		2014-12-18
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	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-06-19
Name/Print	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72,699

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

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3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Receipt date: 03/24/2017

14409219 - GAU: 3716

Doc code: IDS

Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

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	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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	Filing Date		2014-12-18
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	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

/JSM/	1	February 21, 2017 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
/JSM/	2	Nintendo DREAM August issue separate volume, Tomodachi Collection, Shima No Seikatsu Mankitsu Guide, Mainichi Communications Inc., Vol. 14, No. 8, pg. 19, 2009.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-03-24
Name/Print	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72,699

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

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5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.


EAST Search History

EAST Search History (Prior Art)

Ref #	Hits	Search Query	DBs	Default Operator	Plurals	Time Stamp
L1	101490	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
L2	6819081	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
L3	185308	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
L4	47	L1 with L2 with L3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
L5	9350455	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
L6	25	L5 and L4	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2017/07/10 13:46
S1	93663	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S2	6567737	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S3	176873	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S4	42	S1 with S2 with S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
S5	9326423	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S6	25	S5 and S4	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S7	1	("20140038716").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; USOCR	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
S8	3	("20040259642" "20050282634" "20090124393").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S9	3	S8 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S10	8	("2005/0282634").URPN.	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
S11	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:06
S12	3975	a63f13/30,55,67,69,79,798.cpc.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S13	3545	S2 and S12	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:02
S14	524	S13 and S3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03
S15	280	S14 and S5	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 12:03

7/ 10/ 2017 1:55:55 PM

C:\Users\jmcclellan\Documents\EAST\Workspaces\14409219.wsp

Search Notes 	Application/Control No. 14409219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner JAMES S MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716

CPC- SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner
A63 F 13/30, 55, 67, 69, 79, and 798	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM

CPC COMBINATION SETS - SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner

US CLASSIFICATION SEARCHED			
Class	Subclass	Date	Examiner

SEARCH NOTES		
Search Notes	Date	Examiner
EAST Text Search	11/28/2016	JSM
Update Search	7/10/2017	JSM

INTERFERENCE SEARCH			
US Class/ CPC Symbol	US Subclass / CPC Group	Date	Examiner

	/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner. Art Unit 3716
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

1	May 9, 2017 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Saka Tsuku DS Touch and Direct Perfect Guide, ENTERBRAIN, INC., First Version, pp. 74-76, January 8, 2009.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Signature	/B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-06-19
Name/Print	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72,699

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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	29541179
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	19-JUN-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	17:09:09
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Transmittal Letter	Information_Disclosure_State ment.pdf	22823 c4bcb4b0e86e88b9e22f8c9c3285c3d848a b42e9	no	2

Warnings:

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2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	Information_Disclosure_Statement_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1034957	no	4
			313d10db5cd3b4ec2d9c9dec20f91cd9cce09b8da		
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3	Non Patent Literature	JPOA2016-051444_dated_May_9_2017.PDF	70864	no	2
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If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: 3716
For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM	Examiner: J. S. McClellan

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed more than three months after the U.S. filing date AND after the mailing date of the first Office Action on the merits, but before the mailing date of a Final Rejection, Notice of Allowance or other action that closes prosecution (e.g., Quayle Action).
- a. I hereby certify that each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement.
37 CFR §1.97(e)(1).

2. With respect to the following foreign language document, for which a translation is not submitted:

NPL Cite No	Abstract Provided	Discussed in	Discussed in	Corresponds to
2			NPL. cite <u>1</u> .	

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: / B. Graham Nelson /
James A. Oliff
Registration No.: 27,075
B. Graham Nelson
Registration No.: 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: June 19, 2017

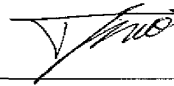
OLIFF PLC
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Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461

STATEMENT

I, Takashi ITO of Kasumigaseki Common Gate West Tower 36F, Kasumigaseki 3-2-1, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0013, Japan hereby declare that I am fluent in both Japanese and English, that I have translated the attached document, and that to the best of my knowledge, ability, and belief this translation is true, accurate, and complete translation of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 2012-140213 filed on June 21, 2012 that was provided to me.

Date: April 20, 2017



Takashi ITO

JAPAN Patent Office

This is to certify that the annexed is a true copy of the following application as filed with this Office.

Date of Application: June 21, 2012

Application Number: Japanese Patent Application No. 2012-140213

The country code and number of your priority application, to be used for filing abroad under the Paris Convention, is: JP2012-140213

Applicant(s): GREE, Inc.

Certified on July 5, 2013

Commissioner,

Japan Patent Office

Hideo HATO (Sealed)

[Name of Document] Patent Application
[Reference Number] GPA0012-JP
[Date of Submission] June 21, 2012
[Addressee] Commissioner, Patent Office
[International Patent Classification] A63F 13/00
[Inventor]
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 [Patent Attorney]
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[Appointed Representative]
 [Identification Number] 100153017
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] OKURA, Akihito
[Appointed Representative]
 [Identification Number] 100164471
 [Patent Attorney]
 [Name] OKANO, Yamato

[Telephone Number]	03-3581-7329
[Contact Information]	Patent Attorney in charge
[Fee]	
[Account Number]	00002451
[Amount of Payment]	JPY 15,000
[List of Attached Item(s)]	
[Item]	Specification: 1
[Item]	Claim(s): 1
[Item]	Abstract: 1
[Item]	Drawing(s): 1

[Name of Document] Description
[Title of Invention] BATTLE GAME SERVER, METHOD OF CONTROLLING
BATTLE GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

[Technical Field]

[0001]

The present invention relates to a battle game server, a method of controlling a battle game server, and a program.

[Background Art]

[0002]

Conventionally, in a battle game server, each user's deck is formed by a plurality of battle cards or the like stored for each user, and the battle game server allows a plurality of users to compete with each other based on the total value of the attack strength and defense strength of the deck (for example, see Patent Literature 1). In such a battle game server, the user acquires a battle card by methods such as purchasing the battle card or obtaining the battle card by winning a battle against an opponent.

[Prior Art Document(s)]

[Patent Document(s)]

[0003]

[Patent Document(s)] 1: JP 2008-120851 A

[Summary of Invention]

[Problems to be solved by the Invention]

[0004]

In a conventional battle game server, however, the methods for acquiring battle cards and the like are limited, causing the user to lose interest in the game. In particular, since it is difficult to acquire a battle card or the like with a high rarity value, the user ends up with the impression that such an item cannot be acquired at all and suffers a drastic loss of interest in the game.

[0005]

Accordingly, the present invention has been conceived in light of the above problems and provides a battle game server, a method of controlling a battle game server, and a program that can increase the variations on methods for acquiring battle cards and the like, increase the predictability of acquisition of a card or the like with a high rarity value or the like, and heighten interest in the game.

[Means for solving the Problem(s)]

[0006]

To solve the above problems, an aspect of the present invention is a battle game server comprising: a memory unit for storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal; information presentation means for presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when a request to present information by the communication terminal is received from the communication terminal; and control means for determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when an item acquisition request is received from the communication terminal, wherein the control means changes and stores, in the memory unit, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[0007]

In the battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0008]

In the battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[0009]

In the battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[0010]

In the battle game server disclosed herein, based on a selection request from the communication terminal, the control means determines one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value to be the item to provide.

[0011]

Another aspect of the present invention is a method of controlling a battle game server, the method comprising the steps of: storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal; presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information; determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and changing and storing in the memory unit, by the control means, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[0012]

In the method of controlling a battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0013]

In The method of controlling a battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[0014]

In the method of controlling a battle game server disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[0015]

In the method of controlling a battle game server disclosed herein, in the determining step, based on a selection request from the communication terminal, one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value is determined to be the item to provide.

[0016]

Another aspect of the present invention is a program for causing a computer that functions as a battle game server to perform the steps of: storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal; presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information; determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and changing and storing in the memory unit, by the control means, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[0017]

In the program disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0018]

In the program disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[0019]

In the program disclosed herein, the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[0020]

In the program disclosed herein, in the determining step, based on a selection request from the communication terminal, one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value is determined to be the item to provide.

[Advantageous Effects of Invention]

[0021]

According to the battle game server, method of controlling a battle game server, and program of the present invention, it is possible to increase the variations on methods for acquiring battle cards and the like, increase the predictability of acquisition of a card or the like with a high numerical value for the item type, and heighten interest in the game.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[0022]

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a battle game server in Embodiment 1;
FIGS. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c) are examples of an item information table in Embodiment 1;
FIG. 3 is an example of a user information table in Embodiment 1;
FIG. 4 is an example of item data in Embodiment 1;
FIG. 5 is an example of acquirable item information in Embodiment 1;
FIG. 6 is a flowchart of operations by the battle game server in Embodiment 1;
FIGS. 7(a) and 7(b) are examples of acquirable item information in Embodiment 2;
FIG. 8 is an example of acquirable item information in Embodiment 3;
FIG. 9 is an example of a scratch card for selection in Embodiment 3; and
FIGS. 10(a) and 10(b) are examples of a screen for selecting an item to acquire.

[Mode(s) for Carrying out the Invention]

[0023]

The following describes embodiments of the present invention.

[0024]

Embodiment 1

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a battle game server 1 in Embodiment 1 of the present invention. The battle game server 1 according to Embodiment 1 of the present invention includes a communication unit 10, a memory unit 11, an information presentation unit 12, and a control unit 13.

[0025]

The communication unit 10 communicates with a communication terminal 2 over either or both of a wireless and wired connection.

[0026]

In association with identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal 2 (referred to below as user identification information), the memory unit 11 stores information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count. An “item” refers to any of a variety of

objects used within a game, such as a battle card constituting a user's deck, a character, a weapon, armor, an ornament, a plant, food, and the like. The item type is a numerical value representing the rarity value of the item, a numerical value representing the category of the item, or the like.

[0027]

Specifically, the memory unit 11 stores this information by dividing the information among tables. A plurality of item information tables 111a to 111c, a user information table 112, and item data 113 are stored in the memory unit 11. While three item information tables are described here, this example is not limiting, and the number of item information tables may be two or fewer, or four or more.

[0028]

The item information tables 111a to 111c are tables including information on the total count of items and the item type. FIGS. 2(a) to 2(c) illustrate examples of the item information tables 111a to 111c. As illustrated in FIGS. 2(a) to 2(c), for example the item information table 111a includes item identification information "UNI1", an item name "item A", and an item type "3". The item identification information is an identifier for uniquely identifying an item in the present system. The item information tables 111a to 111c are provided with table identification information for uniquely identifying an item information table in the battle game server 1. Here, the item information tables 111a to 111c are respectively provided with "TID1", "TID2", and "TID3" as the table identification information.

[0029]

The user information table 112 is a table storing, for each user, the provided items and information for calculating an item acquisition count. The user information table 112 associates the user identification information, table identification information, and identification information of provided items.

[0030]

FIG. 3 illustrates an example of the user information table 112. As illustrated in FIG. 3, the user information table 112 includes user identification information "UID1", table identification information "TID1", identification information of provided items "UNI2" and "UNI4", and the like.

[0031]

The item data 113 stores data on an image for an item provided to the user in association with item identification information. FIG. 4 illustrates an example of the item data 113. As illustrated in FIG. 4, the item data for example includes item identification information "UNI1", an item image "item A image", and the like. The

image data may be in any image format, such as JPEG, GIF, PNG, or the like.

[0032]

When receiving a request to present information from the communication terminal 2, then based on information, stored in the memory unit 11, that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, the information presentation unit 12 presents the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with acquirable item information that includes information, for each item type, on a total count and an acquisition count of items.

[0033]

Specifically, when a request to present information is received from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, then based on the item information tables 111a to 111c, the information presentation unit 12 tallies the total count of items for each item type. The information presentation unit 12 also refers to the user information table 112 to calculate the acquisition count of items for each item type based on the identification information of provided items and the table identification information that correspond to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2. The information presentation unit 12 then presents the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with the result of calculation as the acquirable item information.

[0034]

FIG. 5 is an example of the acquirable item information that the information presentation unit 12 presents. FIG. 5 illustrates an example of the acquirable item information presented when a request to present information is received from the communication terminal 2 and the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 is "UID1". As illustrated in FIG. 5, information 501 on the total count and information 502 on the acquisition count of items for each item type are presented to the communication terminal 2.

[0035]

The control unit 13 performs a variety of control pertaining to the battle game server 1. For example, when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal 2, the control unit 13 determines one item to provide to the communication terminal 2 based on information corresponding to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2.

[0036]

Specifically, when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, the control unit 13 refers to

the user information table 112, and based on the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, retrieves the item information table. Next, the control unit 13 refers to the user information table 112 and retrieves the identification information of provided items that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2. Subsequently, the control unit 13 refers to one of the item information tables 111a to 111c, randomly selects an item not included in the identification information of provided items, and determines that the selected item is the item to provide to the communication terminal 2.

[0037]

The control unit 13 then provides the item to the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10. Specifically, the control unit 13 refers to the item data 113 and provides the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with the item image corresponding to the item identification information pertaining to the item to be provided. The control unit 13 also adds the item identification information pertaining to the provided item to the user information table 112 as identification information of provided items.

[0038]

For example, when an item acquisition request is received from the communication terminal 2, and the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 is “UID1”, then the control unit 13 refers to the user information table 112, and based on the table identification information “TID1” corresponding to UID1, retrieves the item information table 111a. Next, the control unit 13 refers to the user information table 112 and retrieves the identification information of provided items that corresponds to “UID1”. Subsequently, the control unit refers to the item information table 111a, randomly selects item identification information not included in the identification information of provided items (for example, “UNI1”), and determines that the selected item is the item to provide to the communication terminal 2. The control unit 13 then refers to the item data 113 and provides the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with the item image “item A image” corresponding to the item identification information “UNI1” pertaining to the item to be provided. The control unit 13 also adds the item identification information “UNI1” pertaining to the provided item to the user information table 112 as identification information of provided items.

[0039]

Furthermore, in the present invention, the battle game server 1 is configured to

allow for receipt of a reset request at any time from the communication terminal 2. In general terms, the reset request is a request for resetting the current user information table 112. When receiving a reset request from the communication terminal 2 pertaining to predetermined user identification information, the control unit 13 changes and stores, in the memory unit 11, the table identification information and identification information of provided items that correspond to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2.

[0040]

Specifically, when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, the control unit 13 changes the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 and that was stored in the user information table 112 of the memory unit 11 to other table identification information.

[0041]

For example, when a reset request is received from the communication terminal 2, and the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 is “UID1”, the control unit 13 changes the table identification information that corresponds to “UID1” of the user information table 112 randomly from “TID1” to “TID2” or “TID3”.

[0042]

Next, operations by the battle game server 1 in Embodiment 1 of the present invention are described using the flowchart in FIG. 6. It is assumed that the tables illustrated in FIGS. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c) through FIG. 4 have been stored in advance in the memory unit 11 at the time of operation by the battle game server 1.

[0043]

First, when a request to present information is received from the communication terminal 2 (step S1), then based on information, stored in the memory unit 11, that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, the information presentation unit 12 presents the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with acquirable item information that includes information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items (step S2).

[0044]

Specifically, when a request to present information is received from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, then based on the item information tables 111a to 111c, the information presentation unit 12 tallies the total

count of items for each item type. The information presentation unit 12 also refers to the user information table 112 to calculate the acquisition count of items for each item type based on the identification information of provided items and the table identification information that correspond to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2. The information presentation unit 12 then presents the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with the result of calculation as the acquirable item information.

[0045]

Subsequently, when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal 2 (step S3), the control unit 13 determines one item to provide to the communication terminal 2 based on information corresponding to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 (step S4).

[0046]

Specifically, when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, the control unit 13 refers to the user information table 112, and based on the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, retrieves the item information table. Next, the control unit 13 refers to the user information table 112 and retrieves the identification information of provided items that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2. Subsequently, the control unit 13 refers to one of the item information tables 111a to 111c, randomly selects an item not included in the identification information of provided items, and determines that the selected item is the item to provide to the communication terminal 2.

[0047]

Subsequently, the control unit 13 provides the item to the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10 (step S5). Specifically, the control unit 13 refers to the item data 113 and provides the communication terminal 2, via the communication unit 10, with the item image corresponding to the item identification information pertaining to the item to be provided. The control unit 13 also adds the item identification information pertaining to the provided item to the user information table 112 as identification information of provided items.

[0048]

Subsequently, when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal 2 pertaining to predetermined user identification information (step S6), the control unit 13 changes and stores, in the memory unit 11, the table identification information and

identification information of provided items that correspond to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 (step S7).

[0049]

Specifically, when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal 2 via the communication unit 10, the control unit 13 changes the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2 and that was stored in the user information table 112 of the memory unit 11 to other table identification information.

[0050]

In this way, according to the battle game server 1 of Embodiment 1, based on information in the memory unit 11, the information presentation unit 12 presents the communication terminal 2 with acquirable item information that includes information, for each item type of items, on a total count and an acquisition count of items, thereby increasing the predictability of acquisition of an item with a predetermined item type (for example, an item with a high rarity value or the like). Furthermore, the battle game server 1 receives a reset request at any time from the communication terminal 2 and changes information pertaining to items that are provided, the total count of items, and the item type and acquisition count for each item, thereby increasing the variations on methods for acquiring items, increasing the predictability of acquisition of an item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, and heightening interest in the game.

[0051]

After step S7, the information presentation unit 12 may present the communication terminal 2 with post-reset acquirable item information based on the item information tables 111a to 111c and the table identification information of the user information table 112 in the memory unit 11. By doing so, the user can more easily grasp the number of items for each item type after the reset, thereby further increasing the predictability of acquisition of an item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value and heightening interest in the game.

[0052]

The remaining number of all items may be included in the acquirable item information that the information presentation unit 12 presents. Specifically, the information presentation unit 12 may calculate the remaining number of items by subtracting the item acquisition count from the total number of items stored in the item information tables 111a to 111c and include the result of calculation in the acquirable item information.

[0053]

Embodiment 2

The following describes Embodiment 2 of the present invention. Since the structure of the battle game server 1 according to Embodiment 2 is the same as the structure of the battle game server 1 according to Embodiment 1, the same reference numerals are used in the following description. In general terms, Embodiment 2 differs from Embodiment 1 in that the acquirable item information presented by the information presentation unit 12 includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value. The count of necessary attempts for acquisition is retrieved based on information corresponding to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2.

[0054]

Specifically, the information presentation unit 12 refers to the user information table 112, and based on the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, retrieves the item information table pertaining to the user identification information. Next, the information presentation unit 12 refers to the user information table 112 and retrieves the identification information of provided items pertaining to the communication terminal 2. Subsequently, the information presentation unit 12 randomly extracts, from the item information table, 19 pieces of item identification information not included in the identification information of provided items. The information presentation unit 12 stores the 19 extracted pieces of item identification information and stores provision sequence numbers (1 to 19) in the memory unit 11. When receiving an item acquisition request, the control unit 13 determines the item to provide based on the provision sequence numbers stored in the memory unit. In other words, the numbers 1 to 19 each represent the count of acquisition attempts that are necessary in order to acquire the item corresponding to the item identification information (referred to below as the count of necessary attempts for acquisition).

[0055]

Subsequently, the information presentation unit 12 retrieves the item and item type pertaining to each piece of item identification information from one of the item information tables 111a to 111c. Next, for the retrieved items, the information presentation unit 12 retrieves the count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value. The information presentation unit 12 then presents the communication terminal 2 with

acquirable item information that includes the retrieved count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0056]

FIG. 7(a) illustrates an example of acquirable item information presented by the information presentation unit 12 in Embodiment 2. FIG. 7(a) illustrates an example of displaying the provision sequence of items provided to the communication terminal 2 as a gauge when a request to present information is received from the communication terminal 2. The gauge is composed of a plurality of boxes. Items are associated with the boxes 201 to 219 so that the respective counts of necessary acquisition attempts are 1 to 19. Each box is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item.

[0057]

As illustrated in the example in FIG. 7(a), when the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, the pattern shown in box 204 and the like is displayed. Here, the case of the predetermined value being four is illustrated. Conversely, when the numerical value of the item type is less than the predetermined value, the pattern shown in box 201 and the like is displayed. In other words, FIG. 7(a) displays the count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value. FIG. 8(a) also displays each count of necessary attempts for acquisition when the numerical value of the item type is less than a predetermined value.

[0058]

When an item acquisition request is received from the communication terminal 2, an item is provided, and the count of acquisition attempts increases by one, then the count of necessary attempts for acquisition decreases by one for all items. In this case, as illustrated in FIG. 8(b), the items corresponding to boxes 201 to 219 each shift (move) one box to the left. Accordingly, with this gauge, the user can intuitively grasp the predictability of acquisition of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0059]

In this way, according to the battle game server 1 of Embodiment 2, the information presentation unit 12 presents the communication terminal 2 with the count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, thereby increasing the variations on methods for acquiring items, increasing the predictability of acquisition of an item for which the

item type is at least a predetermined value, and heightening interest in the game. Furthermore, displaying the count of necessary attempts for acquisition when the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value further increases the user's sense of anticipation, enticing the user to continue to play the game longer.

[0060]

The patterns for displaying the boxes 201 to 219 are not limited to these examples. The boxes 201 to 219 may be painted a predetermined color in accordance with the item type, or a predetermined icon, character, or the like may be displayed in the boxes 201 to 219.

[0061]

A certain percentage of the boxes for which the numerical value of the item type is less than a predetermined value may be displayed with the same pattern as boxes corresponding to items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value. In this way, items for which the numerical value of the item type is less than a predetermined value are mixed in among the boxes displayed with the pattern corresponding to items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, thereby making the game more interesting and enticing the user to continue to play the game longer.

[0062]

When the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value, detailed information on the item to be provided (referred to below as item detail information) may be presented. The item detail information is preferably the item name and item type. The predetermined value is, for example, two. FIG. 8 is an example of presenting item detail information. The counts of necessary acquisition attempts for boxes 201 and 202 are respectively one and two. Accordingly, the item name is displayed as the item detail information in boxes 201 and 202. With this configuration, the user can grasp the item detail information for items that can be acquired in a range in which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value. Therefore, the user is provided with incentive to increase the occasions of an item acquisition request and is enticed to continue to play the game longer.

[0063]

In the example in FIGS. 7(a) and 7(b), the boxes are displayed with two types of patterns, using the numerical value of the item type as a standard, yet this example is not limiting. A plurality of standard predetermined values may be established to display the boxes with three or more types of patterns. The patterns that are displayed may also

be increased as the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is smaller. With this approach, as the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is smaller, the item type of the item to be acquired can be grasped in greater detail. Therefore, the user is provided with incentive to increase the occasions of an item acquisition request and is enticed to continue to play the game longer.

[0064]

Note that while the gauges in FIGS. 7(a), 7(b), and 8 are composed of 19 boxes, the number of boxes is not limited to 19. The number may be 18 or less, or 20 or more. Furthermore, the approach gauge illustrated in FIG. 8 has an I shape, yet this example is not limiting. Many variations are possible, such as a winding S shape, or a Y shape with a forking tip. In the forking variation, predetermined dummy boxes assigned randomly by the battle game server 1 may be displayed in one of the two forks.

[0065]

In FIGS. 7(a), 7(b), and 8, examples are illustrated in which information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items is also displayed, yet these examples are not limiting. Display may be limited to the gauge, without displaying the information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items. In other words, in FIGS. 7(a), 7(b), and 8, examples are illustrated in which the acquirable item information includes information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items and includes the count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, yet these examples are not limiting. The acquirable item information may be configured to include only the count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[0066]

Embodiment 3

The following describes Embodiment 3 of the present invention. Since the structure of the battle game server 1 according to Embodiment 3 is the same as the structure of the battle game server 1 according to Embodiment 1, the same reference numerals are used in the following description. In general terms, Embodiment 3 differs from Embodiment 1 in that the acquirable item information presented by the information presentation unit 12 includes the total count of items, for each item type, among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[0067]

The acquirable item information presented by the information presentation unit 12 in Embodiment 3 includes the total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value, as retrieved based on the information corresponding to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2.

[0068]

Specifically, the information presentation unit 12 refers to the user information table 112, and based on the table identification information that corresponds to the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, retrieves the item information table pertaining to the user identification information. Next, the information presentation unit 12 refers to the user information table 112 and retrieves the identification information of provided items pertaining to the communication terminal 2. Subsequently, the information presentation unit 12 randomly extracts, from the item information table, 25 pieces of item identification information not included in the identification information of provided items. The information presentation unit 12 stores the 25 extracted pieces of item identification information and stores provision sequence numbers (1 to 25) in the memory unit 11. When receiving an item acquisition request, the control unit 13 determines the item to provide based on the provision sequence numbers stored in the memory unit. In other words, the numbers 1 to 25 each represent the count of necessary attempts for acquisition corresponding to the item identification information.

[0069]

Subsequently, the information presentation unit 12 retrieves the item and item type pertaining to each piece of item identification information from one of the item information tables 111a to 111c. The information presentation unit 12 then tallies the total count of items for which the numerical value of the retrieved item type is at least a predetermined number and presents the communication terminal 2 with acquirable item information that includes the tallied total count of items for each item type.

[0070]

FIG. 9 illustrates an example of acquirable item information presented by the information presentation unit 12 in Embodiment 3. In FIG. 10, items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is 25 or less are displayed with a sheet (scratch card) composed of 25 cells 301 to 325. Each cell corresponds to an item for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is 25 or less. The items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is 25 or less are randomly associated with the cells

301 to 325.

[0071]

As illustrated in the example in FIG. 9, when the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, the pattern shown in cell 301 and the like is displayed. Here, the predetermined value is four. Conversely, when the item type is less than the predetermined value, the pattern shown in cell 302 and the like is displayed. In other words, FIG. 8 displays the total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is 25 or less.

[0072]

In this way, according to the battle game server 1 of Embodiment 3, the information presentation unit 12 presents the communication terminal 2 with the total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value, thereby increasing the variations on methods for acquiring items, further increasing the predictability of acquisition of an item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value, and heightening interest in the game.

[0073]

The patterns for displaying the cells 301 to 325 are not limited to these examples. The cells 301 to 325 may be painted a predetermined color in accordance with the item type, or a predetermined icon, character, or the like may be displayed in the cells 301 to 325.

[0074]

Furthermore, based on a selection request from the communication terminal 2, the control unit 13 may select one item, from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value, as the item to provide. In this case, the information presentation unit 12 may present the communication terminal 2 with a scratch card for selection in which all cells are displayed with the same pattern to prompt the communication terminal 2 to select one of the cells.

[0075]

FIG. 10(a) illustrates an example of a screen for selecting an item to acquire. The screen displays the scratch card for selection. Each cell in the scratch card in FIG. 10(a) corresponds to an item for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is 25 or less. As illustrated in FIG. 10(a), the cells of the scratch card are displayed with

the same pattern, and the user cannot tell what items corresponds to which cells.

[0076]

The user can select any location on the scratch card using an operation unit (not illustrated) such as a key or a touch panel of the communication terminal 2, and the communication terminal 2 transmits a selection request to the battle game server 1 based on the user operation. The control unit 13 of the battle game server 1 then determines that the item corresponding to the cell pertaining to the selection request is the item to provide to the communication terminal 2.

[0077]

FIG. 10(b) illustrates an example of cells 308, 316, and 320 being selected. The selected cells are displayed with the same pattern as the cells in the scratch card shown in FIG. 10. Note that the item detail information corresponding to the selected cells may be displayed in the selected cells.

[0078]

In this way, the variations on methods for acquiring items can be further increased, the predictability of acquisition of an item with a high item type can be further increased, and interest in the game can be heightened.

[0079]

The scratch cards in FIGS. 9, 10(a), and 10(b) are composed of 25 cells in a sheet with 5 rows and 5 columns, yet this example is not limiting. The scratch card may be composed of $M \times N$ cells in a sheet with M rows and N columns (M and N being integers greater than or equal to 2). Furthermore, the scratch cards in FIGS. 10(a) and 10(b) are not limited to a square shape. For example, the scratch cards may be a polygon, or instead of being two-dimensional, the scratch cards may be in a three-dimensional rectangular shape of a die.

[0080]

In FIGS. 9, 10(a), and 10(b), examples are illustrated in which information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items is also displayed, yet these examples are not limiting. Display may be limited to the scratch card, without displaying the information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items. In other words, in FIGS. 10(a), 10(b), and 11, examples are illustrated in which the acquirable item information includes information, for each item type, on the total count and the acquisition count of items and includes the total count of items, for each item type, among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value, yet these examples are not limiting. The acquirable item information may be configured to include only the total count of items, for each item

type, among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[0081]

A computer is preferably used to function as the battle game server 1. A program containing a description of the processing for achieving the functions of the battle game server 1 is stored in the memory unit of the computer, and the functions are achieved by the central processing unit (CPU) of the computer reading and executing the program.

[0082]

Although the present invention has been described based on drawings and examples, it is to be noted that various changes and modifications will be apparent to those skilled in the art based on the present disclosure. Therefore, such changes and modifications are to be understood as included within the scope of the present invention. For example, the functions and the like included in the various units and steps may be reordered in any logically consistent way. Furthermore, units or steps may be combined into one or divided. For example, in Embodiments 1 to 3, a separate one of the item information tables 111a to 111c is associated with each user identification number, yet for example a plurality of users may share one of the item information tables 111a to 111c.

[Reference Numeral(s)]

[0083]

- 1: Battle game server
- 2: Communication terminal
- 10: Communication unit
- 11: Memory unit
- 12: Information presentation unit
- 13: Control unit
- 111a to 111c: Item information table
- 112: User information table
- 113: Item data
- 201 to 219: Box
- 301 to 325: Cell
- 501: Information on the total count of items
- 502: Information on the acquisition count

[Name of Document] Scope of Claims

[Claim 1]

A battle game server comprising:

a memory unit for storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal;

information presentation means for presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when a request to present information by the communication terminal is received from the communication terminal; and

control means for determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when an item acquisition request is received from the communication terminal, wherein

the control means changes and stores, in the memory unit, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[Claim 2]

The battle game server according to claim 1, wherein the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[Claim 3]

The battle game server according to claim 2, wherein the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[Claim 4]

The battle game server according to claim 1, wherein the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[Claim 5]

The battle game server according to claim 4, wherein based on a selection request from

the communication terminal, the control means determines one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value to be the item to provide.

[Claim 6]

A method of controlling a battle game server, the method comprising the steps of:

storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal;

presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information;

determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and

changing and storing in the memory unit, by the control means, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[Claim 7]

The method of controlling a battle game server according to claim 6, wherein the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[Claim 8]

The method of controlling a battle game server according to claim 7, wherein the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[Claim 9]

The method of controlling a battle game server according to claim 6, wherein the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[Claim 10]

The method of controlling a battle game server according to claim 9, wherein in the determining step, based on a selection request from the communication terminal, one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value is determined to be the item to provide.

[Claim 11]

A program for causing a computer that functions as a battle game server to perform the steps of:

storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information uniquely allocated to each user that operates a communication terminal;

presenting, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, the communication terminal with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information;

determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal, an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and

changing and storing in the memory unit, by the control means, the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal to another information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.

[Claim 12]

The program according to claim 11, wherein the acquirable item information includes a count of necessary attempts for acquisition for each item for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a predetermined value.

[Claim 13]

The program according to claim 12, wherein the acquirable item information includes item detail information on items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value.

[Claim 14]

The program according to claim 11, wherein the acquirable item information includes a total count of items for which the numerical value of the item type is at least a

predetermined value among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most a predetermined value.

[Claim 15]

The program according to claim 14, wherein in the determining step, based on a selection request from the communication terminal, one item selected from among items for which the count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value is determined to be the item to provide.

[Name of Document] Abstract

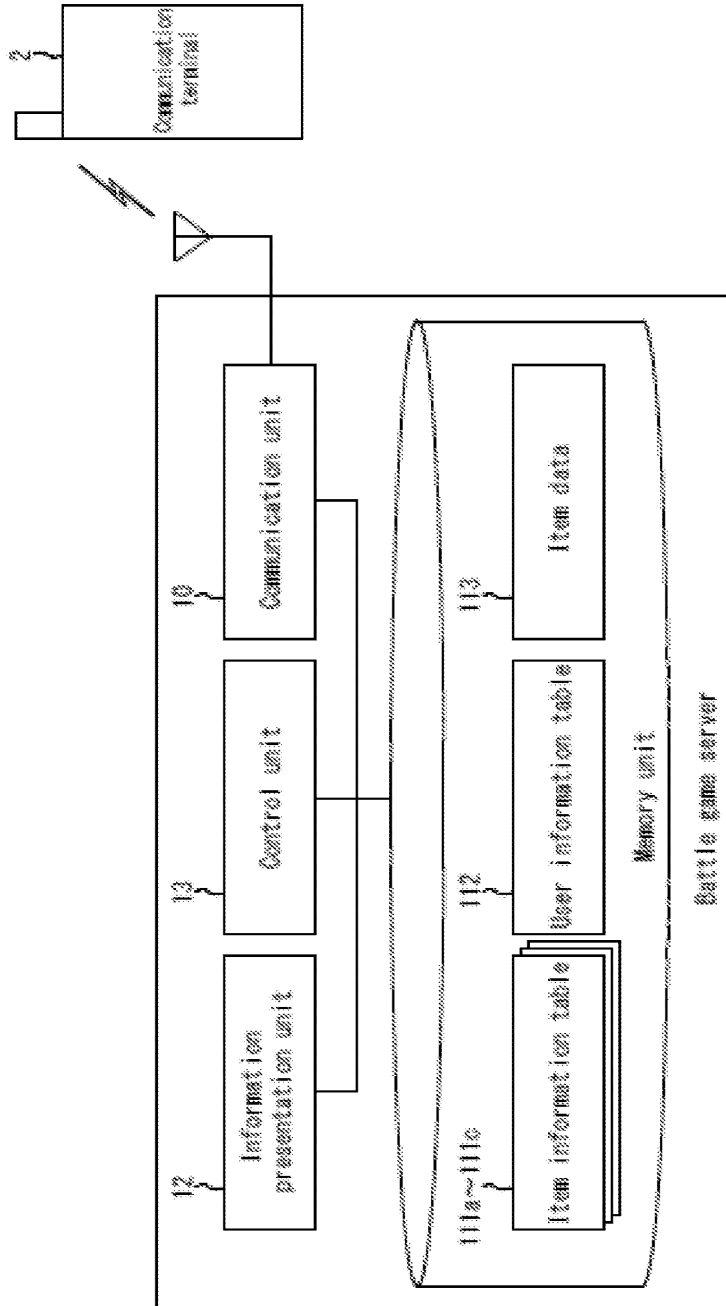
[Summary]

[Object] Disclosed is a battle game server, a method of controlling a battle game server, and a program that can increase variations on methods for acquiring items, increase the predictability of acquisition of an item with a high rarity value or the like, and heighten interest in the game.

[Solving Means] Included are a memory unit 11 for storing information on items to provide, a total count of items, item type, and an acquisition count in association with user identification information; information presentation means 12 for presenting, based on the information, the communication terminal 2 with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count of items when a request to present information is received; and control means 13 for determining, based on the information associated with the user identification information pertaining to the communication terminal 2, an item to provide to the communication terminal 2 when an item acquisition request is received, in which the information is changed to another information and stored in the memory unit 11.

[Selected Drawing] FIG. 1

[Name of Document] Drawings
[FIG. 1]



[FIG 2]

(a)

TID-1		
Item Identification: 10000000000000000000	Item name	Item type
0001	Item A	5
0002	Item B	1
0003	Item C	2
0004	Item D	5
0005	Item E	1
0006	Item F	1
0007	Item G	1
0008	Item H	3
0009	Item I	4
0010	Item J	3
0011	Item K	3
0012	Item K	2
0013	Item K	2
0014	Item L	1
0015	Item M	1
0016	Item M	1
0017	Item N	4
0018	Item O	2
0019	Item P	1
0020	Item Q	1
0021	Item M	3
0022	Item M	3
0023	Item N	5
0024	Item O	3
0025	Item P	1
0026	Item Q	1
0027	Item R	3
0028	Item S	2
0029	Item T	1
0030	Item U	1

(b)

TID-2		
Item Identification: 10000000000000000000	Item name	Item type
000001	Item A1	2
000002	Item S1	3
000003	Item S1	1
000004	Item S1	5
000005	Item S1	2
000006	Item T1	2
000007	Item S1	2
000008	Item H1	5
000009	Item I1	4
000010	Item J1	3
000011	Item K1	2
000012	Item K1	2
000013	Item K1	2
000014	Item L1	1
000015	Item M1	2
000016	Item M1	2
000017	Item M1	2
000018	Item O1	2
000019	Item P1	1
000020	Item S1	5
000021	Item M1	5
000022	Item M1	5
000023	Item K1	5
000024	Item S1	6
000025	Item P1	1
000026	Item O1	1
000027	Item P1	3
000028	Item S1	2
000029	Item T1	1
000030	Item S1	1

(c)

TID-3		
Item Identification: 10000000000000000000	Item name	Item type
000201	Item A2	5
000202	Item S2	2
000203	Item S2	1
000204	Item S2	5
000205	Item S2	2
000206	Item T2	2
000207	Item S2	2
000208	Item K2	3
000209	Item J2	2
000210	Item J2	3
000211	Item K2	1
000212	Item K2	1
000213	Item K2	3
000214	Item L2	2
000215	Item K2	2
000216	Item K2	2
000217	Item K2	4
000218	Item S2	2
000219	Item P2	6
000220	Item S2	3
000221	Item K2	3
000222	Item K2	3
000223	Item K2	4
000224	Item S2	2
000225	Item P2	1
000226	Item S2	1
000227	Item S2	6
000228	Item S2	2
000229	Item J2	1
000230	Item S2	1

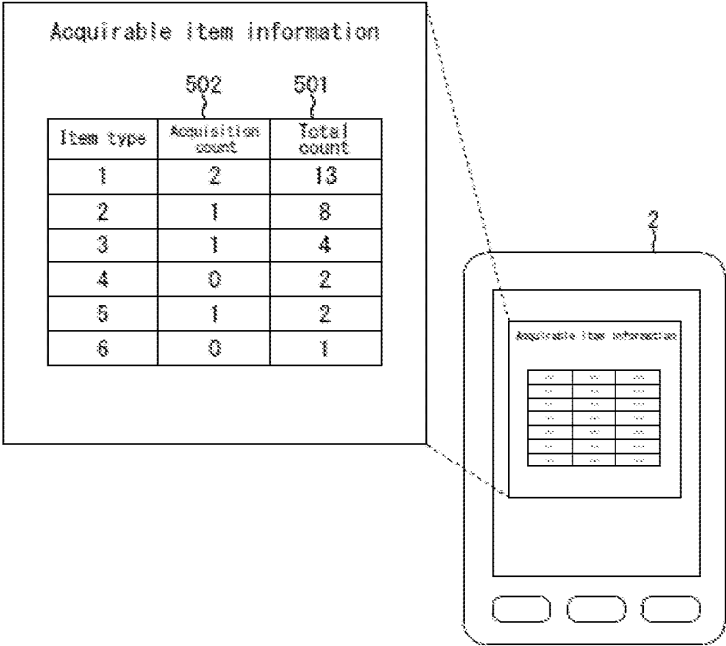
[FIG 3]

Item identification information	Item image	Item identification information	Item image	Item identification information	Item image
UN11	UN11	UN12	UN12	UN13	UN13
UN12	UN12	UN14	UN14	UN15	UN15
UN13	UN13	UN16	UN16	UN17	UN17
UN14	UN14	UN18	UN18	UN19	UN19
UN15	UN15	UN20	UN20	UN21	UN21
UN16	UN16	UN22	UN22	UN23	UN23
...

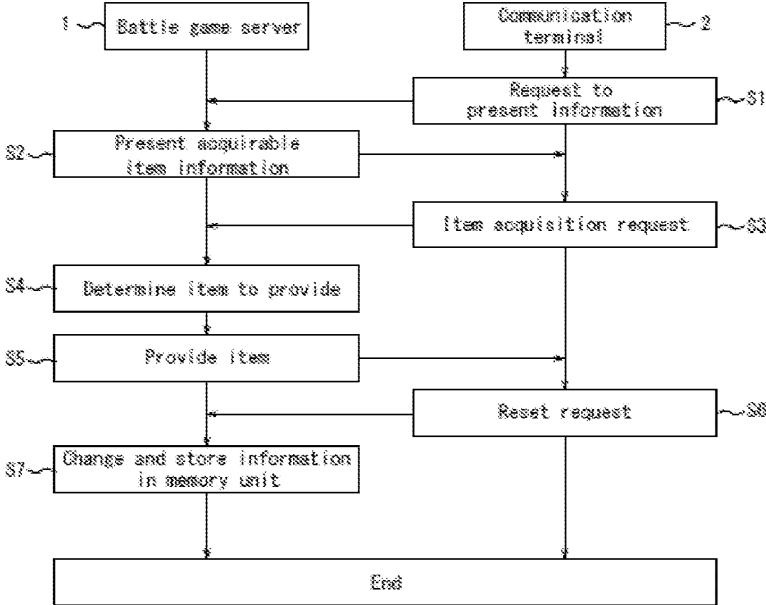
[FIG 4]

Item identification information	Item image
UN11	Item A image
UN12	Item B image
UN13	Item C image
UN14	Item D image
UN15	Item E image
...	...

[FIG. 5]

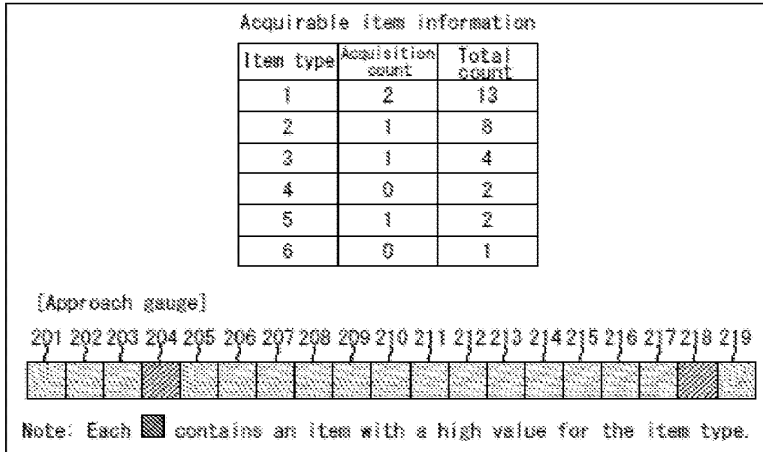


[FIG. 6]

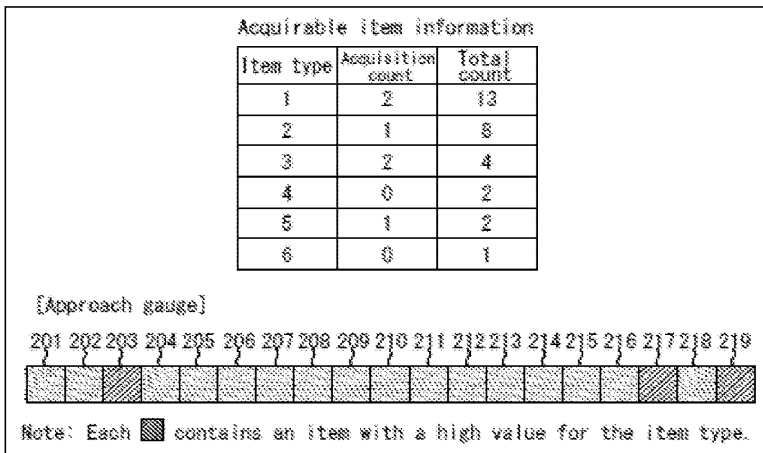


[FIG 7]

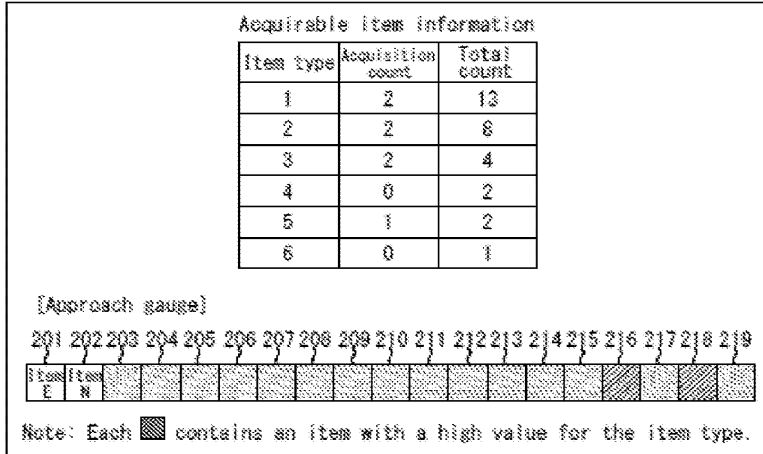
(a)



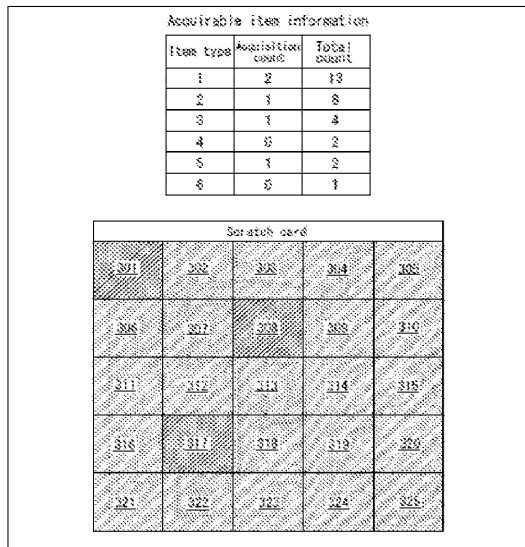
(b)



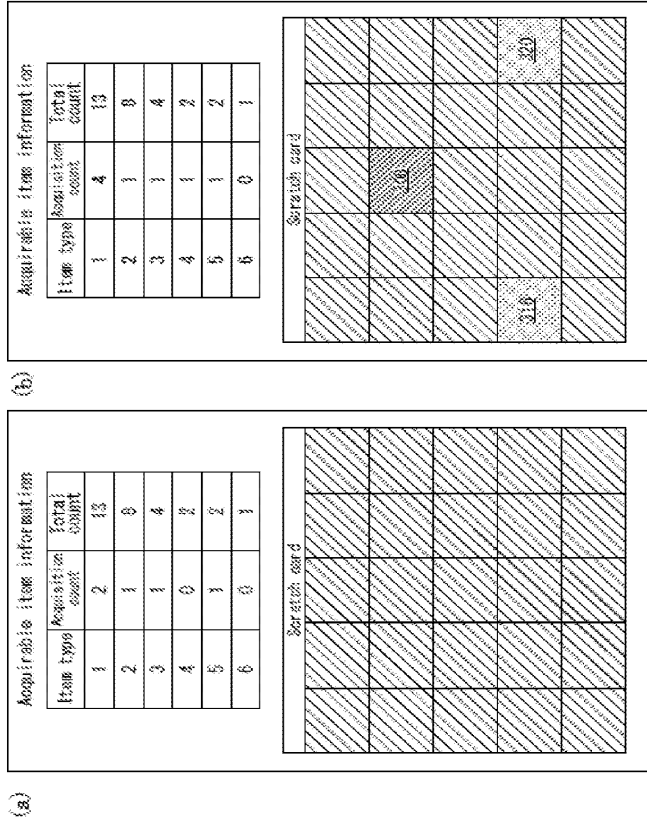
[FIG. 8]



[FIG. 9]



[FIG 10]



Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	29024767
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	25-APR-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	16:40:34
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Interim Copy of the Foreign Priority Document	Submission_of_Translation_of_Priority_Document.pdf	17626 b3590c66afea836eacb7821d587fdbc451f1cda	no	1

Warnings:

Information:					
2	Transmittal Letter	JP2012-140213_Certified_English_Translation.PDF	565246	no	36
			16fb3d98cb55774daf443f78df86f5ac4dc0045c		
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):				582872	
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>					

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3716

Application No.: 14/409,219

Examiner: J. MCCLELLAN

Filed: December 18, 2014

Docket No.: 163485

For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

SUBMISSION OF TRANSLATION OF PRIORITY DOCUMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

On information and belief, the translation of priority application JP 2012-140213 filed herewith is an accurate translation of the original document. The present application is fully supported by the priority application and thus has an effective filing date of June 21, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

/ B. Graham Nelson /

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

B. Graham Nelson
Registration No. 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: April 25, 2017

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<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Group Art Unit: 3716

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AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

In reply to the December 1, 2016 Office Action and upon entry of the attached
Petition for Extension of Time, please consider the following:

Amendments to the Claims as reflected in the listing of claims; and

Remarks.

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A game control method comprising the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table~~presenting a communication terminal, connected over a communication line, with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count or a non-acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information related to items acquirable by the communication terminal;~~

(b) receiving a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server~~determining an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and~~

(c) displaying an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request~~changing the acquirable item information when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The game control method according to claim 1, further comprising; wherein

(d) displaying the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells~~in step (a), a method for presenting the acquirable item information presented to the communication terminal differs between a first item and a second item, a numerical value of~~

~~the item type being at least a predetermined value for the first item, and the numerical value of the item type being less than the predetermined value for the second item.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The game control method according to ~~claim 2~~claim 1,

wherein

~~in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item; the acquirable item information for the first item includes identification information or an image for an item.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The game control method according to claim 2,

wherein

~~in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item; information on another user who has acquired the first item is presented.~~

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A ~~game server~~computer comprising:

~~a display configured to display a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table; information presentation means for presenting a communication terminal, connected over a communication line, with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count or a non-acquisition count of items when a request to present information related to items acquirable by the communication terminal is received from the communication terminal; and~~

~~a controller configured to (i) receive a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells, and (ii) send the selection request to the server, wherein the display displays an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request~~
~~control means for determining an item to provide to the communication terminal when an item acquisition request is received from the communication terminal, wherein~~
~~the control means changes the acquirable item information when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~computer game server~~ according to claim 6, wherein

~~the display displays the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells~~
~~the information presentation means adopts a different method for presenting the acquirable item information presented to the communication terminal for a first item than for a second item, a numerical value of the item type being at least a predetermined value for the first item, and the numerical value of the item type being less than the predetermined value for the second item.~~

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~computer game server~~ according to ~~claim 7~~claim 6, wherein

~~the display displays each of the plurality of cells with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item~~
~~the acquirable item information for the first item includes identification information or an image for an item.~~

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~computer game server~~ according to claim 7, wherein

~~the display displays each of the plurality of cells with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item~~
~~the information presentation means presents information on another user who has acquired the first item.~~

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer readable recording

medium having stored thereon instructions to be executed on a computer ~~that functions as a battle game server,~~ the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:

(a) displaying a plurality of cells and acquirable item information that is received from a server over a communication line, the plurality of cells being displayed in the same size, wherein each of a plurality of items extracted from an item information table pertaining to a user is associated with each of the plurality of cells, the plurality of items being selected randomly only from items in the item information table~~presenting a communication terminal, connected over a communication line, with acquirable item information that, for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count or a non-acquisition count of items when receiving, from the communication terminal, a request to present information related to items acquirable by the communication terminal;~~

(b) receiving a selection request selecting one of the plurality of cells and sending the selection request to the server~~determining an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal; and~~

(c) displaying an item associated with the selected cell, which is determined by the server based on the selection request~~changing the acquirable item information when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal.~~

12. (Currently Amended) The non-transitory computer readable recording

medium according to claim 11, wherein the instructions cause the computer to further perform the step of:

(d) displaying the selected cell in a different way from the others of the plurality of cells~~in step (a), a method for presenting the acquirable item information presented to the communication terminal differs between a first item and a second item, a numerical value of~~

~~the item type being at least a predetermined value for the first item, and the numerical value of the item type being less than the predetermined value for the second item.~~

13. (Currently Amended) The non-transitory computer readable recording medium according to ~~claim 12~~claim 11, wherein

~~in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item; the acquirable item information for the first item includes identification information or an image for an item.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The non-transitory computer readable recording medium according to claim 12, wherein

~~in step (a), each of the plurality of cells is displayed with a pattern that differs in accordance with the item type of the corresponding item; in step (a), information on another user who has acquired the first item is presented.~~

15. (Canceled)

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11-14 are amended, and claims 5, 10, and 15 are canceled. No new matter is added. Support for the claim amendments can be found in the original disclosure at, for example, paragraphs [0071], [0073], [0076], [0077], [0079], and [0080] of the specification and Fig.10(b).

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives by Examiner McClellan at the interview held March 21, 2017, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

I. Formal Matters

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter based on the Supreme Court's decision in *Alice Corp. Pty. Ltd. v. CLS Bank Int'l.*¹ ("*CLS Bank*"). In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Independent claims 1, 6 and 11 are amended to recite "significantly more" than the so-called abstract idea of "inventory management." In particular, the claims now recite *with specificity* how the cells are displayed (in the same size); how the items are extracted (from an item information table pertaining to the user); how the items are associated (each item is associated with each of the cells); and how the items are selected (randomly only from items in the item information table). The claims further recite that these cells are displayed together with acquirable item information received from a server over a communication line; that a selection request of one of the cells is received and sent to the server; and that an item associated with the selected cell determined by the server based on the selection request is displayed.

¹ Appeal No. 13-298, 573 U.S. ____ (2014).

The claims as amended are patent-eligible under the *Alice* framework, as confirmed by at least the recent Federal Circuit opinion of *McRO, Inc. v. Bandai Namco* (Fed. Cir. September 13, 2016). The claims at issue in *McRO* are directed to the abstract idea of comparing information and using rules to identify options, seeking to automate a process previously known to be conducted by humans, and do not restrict the implementation of the abstract idea to a particular machine or provide any transformation. Specifically, the representative claim in *McRO* recited a method for automatically animating lip synchronization and facial expression comprising obtaining a first set of rules, obtaining a timed data file, generating intermediate weight sets and parameters, generating final weight sets, and applying the final weight sets to produce lip synchronization in animated characters. On page 25 of *McRO*, the Federal Circuit states, "While the result may not be tangible, there is nothing that requires a method 'be tied to a machine or transform an article' to be patentable...The concern underlying the exceptions to §101 is not tangibility, but preemption." Like the patent-eligible claim in the *McRO* decision, the claims of this application recite specific limitations which do not preempt *all* ways of acquiring and displaying information. Instead, the claims recite the very specific ways of acquiring and displaying information discussed in the foregoing paragraph. In addition, like the patent-eligible claim in the *McRO* decision, the claims of this application are focused on a specific improvement which solve problems in the relevant field. As discussed in this application, in conventional games the methods for acquiring cards and the like are limited, causing the user to lose interest in the game. With the claimed arrangements, by displaying a plurality of cells, wherein an acquirable item is associated with each of the plurality of cells, a user is provided with increased predictability of acquisition of an item with a high item type, which may result in heightened interest in the game by the user. Meanwhile, some level of unpredictability is maintained because the selection is made from the plurality of cells, which

provides an element of surprise and uncertainty with each selection to enhance enjoyment. Because the claims of this application do not preempt *all* ways of acquiring and displaying information, and because the claims are directed to a solution to a problem in the gaming field, the claims are directed to patent-eligible subject matter in keeping with the *McRO* decision. The combination of limitations in the claims certainly embody "significantly more" than an abstract idea. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. The Pending Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 1-15 are rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Endo (US 2014/0038716). In response, Applicant respectfully submits that Endo does not qualify as prior art under pre-AIA §102.

On page 5 of the Office Action, it is asserted that Endo is prior art under pre-AIA §102(e), and Endo's foreign priority date of July 27, 2011 is cited. However, as confirmed by MPEP 2136.03, a reference's foreign priority date cannot be used as a §102(e) date. In keeping with §102(e), Endo is not prior art because it was not filed in the United States before the invention of this application, and Endo's PCT application was not published in English. In addition, Endo does not qualify under either pre-AIA §102(a) or (b). Accordingly, Endo is not prior art to the claims of this application. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

/ B. Graham Nelson /

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

B. Graham Nelson
Registration No. 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

Date: March 30, 2017

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Group Art Unit: 3716

Application No.: 14/409,219

Examiner: J. MCCLELLAN

Filed: December 18, 2014

Docket No.: 163485

For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

**LARGE ENTITY PETITION FOR 1st - 3rd EXTENSION
OF TIME UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) AND
TRANSMITTAL OF FEE UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.17**

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Transmitted herewith is a response to the outstanding Official Action in the above-identified patent application. The shortened statutory period having expired March 1, 2017, an extension of time for a period of 1 month is hereby requested.

The fees associated with this filing under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) are being paid electronically with this filing. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee (or credit any overpayment) associated for this filing to Deposit Account No. 15-0461.

Respectfully submitted,

/ B. Graham Nelson /

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

B. Graham Nelson
Registration No. 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: March 30, 2017

**OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	14409219			
Filing Date:	18-Dec-2014			
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM			
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa			
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum			
Attorney Docket Number:	163485			
Filed as Large Entity				
Filing Fees for U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
Pages:				
Claims:				
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:				
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				
Extension-of-Time:				

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Extension - 1 month with \$0 paid	1251	1	200	200
Miscellaneous:				
Total in USD (\$)				200

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	28791368
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	30-MAR-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	17:16:19
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	DA
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$200
RAM confirmation Number	033117INTEFSW00004482150461
Deposit Account	
Authorized User	

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

File Listing:					
Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1		2017_0330_Amendment.pdf	48754 7271036817f54e6e844c7f68343a3b61048b21c	yes	10
Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description					
Document Description			Start	End	
Amendment/Req. Reconsideration-After Non-Final Reject			1	1	
Claims			2	6	
Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment			7	10	
Warnings:					
Information:					
2	Extension of Time	20170330_EOT.pdf	20040 dd2362237ee0d96968226b00317339a5f5903b01	no	1
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	31111 90c53e154bd00cf90d6a3fd9dfec58c5f633eb84	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			99905		

This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 14/409,219	Filing Date 12/18/2014	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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ENTITY: LARGE SMALL MICRO

APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)		RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(k), (j), or (m))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))</small>	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	minus 20 =	*	X \$	=	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	minus 3 =	*	X \$	=	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).				
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.				TOTAL	

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT	03/30/2017	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	* 12	Minus ** 20	= 0	X \$80 =	0
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	* 3	Minus ***3	= 0	X \$420 =	0
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0	

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT		CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	*	Minus **	=	X \$	=
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	*	Minus ***	=	X \$	=
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>					
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE		

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

LIE
BURNELL L. ROSS

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
 If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
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www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	03/29/2017	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			03/29/2017	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com

<i>Applicant-Initiated Interview Summary</i>	Application No. 14/409,219	Applicant(s) YOSHIKAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner JAMES S. MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716	

All participants (applicant, applicant's representative, PTO personnel):

(1) JAMES S. MCCLELLAN. (3) J. Stelacne (42,168).
(2) G. Nelson (72,699). (4) _____.

Date of Interview: 21 March 2017.

Type: Telephonic Video Conference
 Personal [copy given to: applicant applicant's representative]

Exhibit shown or demonstration conducted: Yes No.
If Yes, brief description: _____.

Issues Discussed 101 112 102 103 Others
(For each of the checked box(es) above, please describe below the issue and detailed description of the discussion)

Claim(s) discussed: 1.

Identification of prior art discussed: Endo (2014/0038716).

Substance of Interview
(For each issue discussed, provide a detailed description and indicate if agreement was reached. Some topics may include: identification or clarification of a reference or a portion thereof, claim interpretation, proposed amendments, arguments of any applied references etc...)

Applicant suggested claim language focused on capturing the disclosed features of the embodiment shown in Fig. 9 and 10 of the current application. During the discussion, Applicant agreed that Endo likely reads on proposed claim amendments that add a "pluarlity of cells" for holding game items. Applicant indicated that he may consider amending the claims to clarify how the plurality of cells are populated with game items, including taking into consideration the experience level of the user. The Examiner agreed that a change commensurate in scope with Applicant's proposal during the interview will likely move the application closer to allowance. We also discussed that such a change claim scope will also likely over the 101 rejection.

Applicant recordation instructions: The formal written reply to the last Office action must include the substance of the interview. (See MPEP section 713.04). If a reply to the last Office action has already been filed, applicant is given a non-extendable period of the longer of one month or thirty days from this interview date, or the mailing date of this interview summary form, whichever is later, to file a statement of the substance of the interview

Examiner recordation instructions: Examiners must summarize the substance of any interview of record. A complete and proper recordation of the substance of an interview should include the items listed in MPEP 713.04 for complete and proper recordation including the identification of the general thrust of each argument or issue discussed, a general indication of any other pertinent matters discussed regarding patentability and the general results or outcome of the interview, to include an indication as to whether or not agreement was reached on the issues raised.

Attachment

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716	
---------------------------------------------------------	--

Summary of Record of Interview Requirements

Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP), Section 713.04, Substance of Interview Must be Made of Record

A complete written statement as to the substance of any face-to-face, video conference, or telephone interview with regard to an application must be made of record in the application whether or not an agreement with the examiner was reached at the interview.

Title 37 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1.133 Interviews Paragraph (b)

In every instance where reconsideration is requested in view of an interview with an examiner, a complete written statement of the reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action must be filed by the applicant. An interview does not remove the necessity for reply to Office action as specified in §§ 1.111, 1.135. (35 U.S.C. 132)

37 CFR §1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent or Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.

The action of the Patent and Trademark Office cannot be based exclusively on the written record in the Office if that record is itself incomplete through the failure to record the substance of interviews.

It is the responsibility of the applicant or the attorney or agent to make the substance of an interview of record in the application file, unless the examiner indicates he or she will do so. It is the examiner's responsibility to see that such a record is made and to correct material inaccuracies which bear directly on the question of patentability.

Examiners must complete an Interview Summary Form for each interview held where a matter of substance has been discussed during the interview by checking the appropriate boxes and filling in the blanks. Discussions regarding only procedural matters, directed solely to restriction requirements for which interview recordation is otherwise provided for in Section 812.01 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, or pointing out typographical errors or unreadable script in Office actions or the like, are excluded from the interview recordation procedures below. Where the substance of an interview is completely recorded in an Examiners Amendment, no separate Interview Summary Record is required.

The Interview Summary Form shall be given an appropriate Paper No., placed in the right hand portion of the file, and listed on the "Contents" section of the file wrapper. In a personal interview, a duplicate of the Form is given to the applicant (or attorney or agent) at the conclusion of the interview. In the case of a telephone or video-conference interview, the copy is mailed to the applicant's correspondence address either with or prior to the next official communication. If additional correspondence from the examiner is not likely before an allowance or if other circumstances dictate, the Form should be mailed promptly after the interview rather than with the next official communication.

The Form provides for recordation of the following information:

- Application Number (Series Code and Serial Number)
- Name of applicant
- Name of examiner
- Date of interview
- Type of interview (telephonic, video-conference, or personal)
- Name of participant(s) (applicant, attorney or agent, examiner, other PTO personnel, etc.)
- An indication whether or not an exhibit was shown or a demonstration conducted
- An identification of the specific prior art discussed
- An indication whether an agreement was reached and if so, a description of the general nature of the agreement (may be by attachment of a copy of amendments or claims agreed as being allowable). Note: Agreement as to allowability is tentative and does not restrict further action by the examiner to the contrary.
- The signature of the examiner who conducted the interview (if Form is not an attachment to a signed Office action)

It is desirable that the examiner orally remind the applicant of his or her obligation to record the substance of the interview of each case. It should be noted, however, that the Interview Summary Form will not normally be considered a complete and proper recordation of the interview unless it includes, or is supplemented by the applicant or the examiner to include, all of the applicable items required below concerning the substance of the interview.

A complete and proper recordation of the substance of any interview should include at least the following applicable items:

- 1) A brief description of the nature of any exhibit shown or any demonstration conducted,
- 2) an identification of the claims discussed,
- 3) an identification of the specific prior art discussed,
- 4) an identification of the principal proposed amendments of a substantive nature discussed, unless these are already described on the Interview Summary Form completed by the Examiner,
- 5) a brief identification of the general thrust of the principal arguments presented to the examiner,
(The identification of arguments need not be lengthy or elaborate. A verbatim or highly detailed description of the arguments is not required. The identification of the arguments is sufficient if the general nature or thrust of the principal arguments made to the examiner can be understood in the context of the application file. Of course, the applicant may desire to emphasize and fully describe those arguments which he or she feels were or might be persuasive to the examiner.)
- 6) a general indication of any other pertinent matters discussed, and
- 7) if appropriate, the general results or outcome of the interview unless already described in the Interview Summary Form completed by the examiner.

Examiners are expected to carefully review the applicant's record of the substance of an interview. If the record is not complete and accurate, the examiner will give the applicant an extendable one month time period to correct the record.

Examiner to Check for Accuracy

If the claims are allowable for other reasons of record, the examiner should send a letter setting forth the examiner's version of the statement attributed to him or her. If the record is complete and accurate, the examiner should place the indication, "Interview Record OK" on the paper recording the substance of the interview along with the date and the examiner's initials.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

U.S.PATENTS							Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
	1						

If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.

U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS							Remove
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If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²ⁱ	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button.

NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS				Remove
Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.		T ⁵

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit	3716	
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

1	February 21, 2017 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	✕
2	Nintendo DREAM August issue separate volume, Tomodachi Collection, Shima No Seikatsu Mankitsu Guide, Mainichi Communications Inc., Vol. 14, No. 8, pg. 19, 2009.	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	<input type="text"/>	Date Considered	<input type="text"/>
--------------------	----------------------	-----------------	----------------------

*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3716
	Examiner Name	J. S. McClellan
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/B. Graham Nelson/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-03-24
Name/Print	B. Graham Nelson	Registration Number	72,699

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: 3716
For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM	Examiner: J. S. McClellan

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed more than three months after the U.S. filing date AND after the mailing date of the first Office Action on the merits, but before the mailing date of a Final Rejection, Notice of Allowance or other action that closes prosecution (e.g., Quayle Action).
- a. I hereby certify that each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this Information Disclosure Statement.
37 CFR §1.97(e)(1).

2. With respect to the following foreign language documents, for which a translation is not submitted:

NPL Cite No	Abstract Provided	Discussed in	Discussed in	Corresponds to
2			NPL. cite <u>1</u>	

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: / B. Graham Nelson /
James A. Oliff
Registration No.: 27,075
B. Graham Nelson
Registration No.: 72,699

JAO:BGN/dkt

Date: March 24, 2017

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	28733219
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Darrisaw Tatum
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	24-MAR-2017
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	15:43:15
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Non Patent Literature	JPOA2016-051444.PDF	195077 a057472811f2a76dd911001d5320d8ec5ad544fb	no	3

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2	Non Patent Literature	English_translation_ofJPOA2016-051444.PDF	279281	no	3
			a7b3581c0e0c89770da5494c5d1298b16dc905e4		

Warnings:

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3	Non Patent Literature	CD1_Non_Patent_Document.PDF	460536	no	3
			8550d870c1e773d4dc8e14d10dc0b17ca823906e		

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4	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	Information_Disclosure_Statement_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1034980	no	4
			384a7383f226a71096144e94d23ac0c2c3a88834		

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5	Transmittal Letter	Information_Disclosure_Statement.pdf	22582	no	2
			960e49913249e5732a8eb373d59efc4e4d42b2eb		

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New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.



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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
14/409,219	12/18/2014	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa	163485	7235
25944	7590	12/01/2016	EXAMINER	
OLIFF PLC P.O. BOX 320850 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850			MCCLELLAN, JAMES S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3716	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/01/2016	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

OfficeAction25944@oliff.com
jarmstrong@oliff.com

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

1. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

2. Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter because the claim(s) as a whole, considering all claim elements both individually and in combination, do not amount to significantly more than an abstract idea (one of the three judicial exceptions).

In this case, the claim(s) is/are directed to the abstract idea of inventory management, which is described in the claim(s). The following subject matter in the claim(s) describes the above identified abstract idea even though not expressly recited: acquiring item information and changing acquirable item information. Further, the above identified abstract idea is similar to concepts that have been identified as abstract by the courts, including:

Precedential Cases:

- Collecting and comparing known information in *Classen Immunotherapies*;
- Organizing information through mathematical correlations in *Digitech*;
- Data recognition or storage in *Content Extraction*;

Non-Precedential Cases:

- Managing a Game of Bingo in *Planet Bingo*;
- Allowing players to purchase additional objects during a game in *Gametek*;
- Comparing new and stored information and using rules to identify options in *SmartGene*;

In contrast to *McRo v. Bandai Namco Games America*, the current claims, when considered as a whole, do not appear to describe a specific way to solve a problem, but appear to merely claim the idea of a solution or outcome. The *McRo* court relied on an explanation in the specification that described how the claimed rules enabled a computer to improve an existing technological process, unlike cases where a computer was merely used as a tool to perform an existing process (e.g., as in *Alice*). For these reasons, the current claims are directed to an abstract idea.

The additional element(s) or combination of elements in the claim(s) other than the abstract idea when considered as a whole do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea. For example, the following additional recited claim feature(s) related to computing amount to little more than the use of a general purpose computer, which has been held by the courts in *Alice* to not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea:

- Presenting a communication terminal;
- Information presentation means;
- Control means; and
- Game server.

In BASCOM v. AT&T Mobility, the court held that the recited generic computer, network, and Internet components did not amount to significantly more than the underlying abstract, but explained that the non-conventional and non-generic arrangement of additional elements when considered in combination may amount to significantly more. In this case, the claim(s) recites the following limitation(s) or feature(s) that may extend beyond the identified abstract idea but do not amount to significantly more than the identified abstract idea because they are well-understood, routine, conventional activities (Mayo) to those in the gaming field:

- The inventoried items are game items; and
- Displaying game item data

Viewed as a whole, the additional claim element(s) do not provide meaningful limitations to transform the abstract idea into a patent eligible application of the abstract idea such that the claim(s) amounts to significantly more than the abstract idea itself. See Alice Corp. v. CLS Bank Int'l, 110 USPQ2d 1976 (U.S. 2014). Therefore, the claim(s) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-15 are rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2014/0038716 to Endo (Foreign Priority of July 27, 2011).

With regard to **claim 1**, Endo discloses game control method comprising the steps of: (a) presenting a communication terminal (e.g., see Fig. 1), connected over a communication line, with acquirable item information that (e.g., see Fig. 2; see also at least paragraphs 5, 8, 11, and 13), for each item type, includes a total count and an acquisition count or a non-acquisition count of items when receiving (e.g., see Figs. 2A, 2B, and 4; see also at least paragraphs 25-28), from the communication terminal, a request to present information related to items acquirable by the communication terminal (e.g., see Fig. 3); (b) determining an item to provide to the communication terminal when receiving an item acquisition request from the communication terminal (e.g., see Figs. 3 and 4); and (c) changing the acquirable item information when receiving a reset request from the communication terminal (e.g., see at least paragraph 27);

[**claim 2**] wherein in step (a), a method for presenting the acquirable item information presented to the communication terminal differs between a first item and a second item, a numerical value of the item type being at least a predetermined value for the first item, and the numerical value of the item type being less than the predetermined value for the second item (e.g., see at least paragraphs 25-28);

[**claim 3**] wherein the acquirable item information for the first item includes identification information or an image for an item (e.g., see Fig. 2A, jewel images);

[**claim 4**] wherein in step (a), information on another user who has acquired the first item is presented (e.g., see at least paragraphs 4, 8, and 27);

[**claim 5**] wherein in step (b), based on a selection request from the communication terminal, one item selected from among items for which a count of necessary attempts for acquisition is at most the predetermined value is determined to be the item to provide (e.g., see at least paragraphs 25-28, 37, and 37).

With regard to **claims 6-10**, Endo discloses a game server (e.g., see at least paragraphs 21, 24, and 25) as detailed above for claims 1-5, which are similar in claim scope.

With regard to **claims 11-1**, Endo discloses a non-transitory computer readable recording medium (e.g., see at least paragraph 25) as detailed above for claims 1-5, which are similar in claim scope.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure, includes: U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2012/0004038 to Van Luchene; U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0259642 to Tanaka; and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2014/0143687 to Tan.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES S. MCCLELLAN whose telephone number is (571)272-7167. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30AM-5:00PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dmitry Suhol can be reached on (571) 272-4430. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JAMES S. MCCLELLAN/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3716

Notice of References Cited	Application/Control No. 14/409,219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.	
	Examiner JAMES S. MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716	Page 1 of 1

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	CPC Classification	US Classification
*	A	US-2012/0004038 A1	01-2012	Van Luchene; Andrew	G07F17/32	463/42
*	B	US-2004/0259642 A1	12-2004	Tanaka, Shoya	A63F13/12	463/42
*	C	US-2014/0143687 A1	05-2014	Tan; Min-Liang	G06F3/1462	715/757
	D	US-				
	E	US-				
	F	US-				
	G	US-				
	H	US-				
	I	US-				
	J	US-				
	K	US-				
	L	US-				
	M	US-				


FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Country	Name	CPC Classification
	N					
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	P					
	Q					
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NON-PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Include as applicable: Author, Title Date, Publisher, Edition or Volume, Pertinent Pages)
	U	
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	X	

*A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)
Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign.

Search Notes 	Application/Control No. 14409219	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination YOSHIKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner JAMES S MCCLELLAN	Art Unit 3716

CPC- SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner
A63 F 13/30, 55, 67, 69, 79, and 798	11/28/2016	JSM

CPC COMBINATION SETS - SEARCHED		
Symbol	Date	Examiner

US CLASSIFICATION SEARCHED			
Class	Subclass	Date	Examiner

SEARCH NOTES		
Search Notes	Date	Examiner
EAST Text Search	11/28/2016	JSM

INTERFERENCE SEARCH			
US Class/ CPC Symbol	US Subclass / CPC Group	Date	Examiner

	/JAMES S MCCLELLAN/ Primary Examiner.Art Unit 3716
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Receipt date: 11/17/2016

14409219 - GAU: 3716

Doc code: IDS

PTO/SB/08a (03-15)

Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

Approved for use through 07/31/2016. OMB 0651-0031

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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14409219 - GAU: 3716

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	14409219
Filing Date	2014-12-18
First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
Art Unit	3717
Examiner Name	K. Hu
Attorney Docket Number	163485

/JSM/	1	October 4, 2016 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	×
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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	/James S. McClellan/	Date Considered	11/28/2016
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

Receipt date: 11/17/2016

14409219 - GAU: 3716

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit		3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu	
	Attorney Docket Number		163485

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Olga Hernandez/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2016-11-17
Name/Print	Olga Hernandez	Registration Number	58,232

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
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9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

EAST Search History

EAST Search History (Prior Art)

Ref #	Hits	Search Query	DBs	Default Operator	Plurals	Time Stamp
L1	93663	video adj game\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
L2	6567737	item\$2 or object\$2	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
L3	176873	inventory	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
L4	42	1 with 2 with 3	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:03
L5	9326423	@ad< "20120621"	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
L6	25	5 and 4	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
L7	1	("20140038716").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT; USOCR	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:04
L8	3	("20040259642" "20050282634" "20090124393").PN.	US-PGPUB; USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
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L10	8	("2005/0282634").URPN.	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:05
L11	17	"409,219"	USPAT	OR	OFF	2016/11/28 11:06
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Receipt date: 05/07/2015

14409219 - GAU: 3716

Doc code: IDS

PTO/SB/08a (01-10)

Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

Approved for use through 07/31/2012. OMB 0651-0031

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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Art Unit	3717
Examiner Name	K. Hu
Attorney Docket Number	163485

/JSM/	1	February 3, 2015 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2014-208126.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Examiner Signature	/James S. McClellan/	Date Considered	11/28/2016
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	Examiner Name	K. Hu	
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See attached certification statement.

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Signature	/Todd M. Guise/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2015-05-07
Name/Print	Todd M. Guise	Registration Number	46748

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3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
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8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Receipt date: 03/04/2016

14409219 - GAU: 3716

Doc code: IDS

PTO/SB/08a (03-15)

Doc description: Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed

Approved for use through 07/31/2016. OMB 0651-0031

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	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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Application Number	14409219
Filing Date	2014-12-18
First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
Art Unit	3717
Examiner Name	K. Hu
Attorney Docket Number	163485

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Signature	/Travis V. Howell/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2016-03-04
Name/Print	Travis V. Howell	Registration Number	73150

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	Art Unit	N/A
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/JSM/	7	Social Game Review 7: Social Gacha's payment encouragement scheme has overwhelmed network games [online], GameCast iPhone, February 11, 2012, (with partial translation).	<input type="checkbox"/>
/JSM/	8	"POWER PRO KUN POCKET 14 OFFICIAL COMPLETE GUIDE", Enterbrain, 1st Edition, page 157, February 22, 2012, (with partial translation).	<input type="checkbox"/>
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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	/James S. McClellan/	Date Considered	11/28/2016
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Signature	/Todd M. Guise/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2015-01-08
Name/Print	Todd M. Guise	Registration Number	46748

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²ⁱ	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS				Remove
Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.		T ⁵

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

1	October 4, 2016 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2016-051444.	×
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Examiner Signature	Date Considered

*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Olga Hernandez/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2016-11-17
Name/Print	Olga Hernandez	Registration Number	58,232

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
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9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	27538984
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Vern Hyslop
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	17-NOV-2016
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	10:54:24
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Transmittal Letter	Information_Disclosure_State ment.pdf	20227 bfdd3957550e01c0cd9474311a58dbca7f77 9156	no	1

Warnings:

Information:					
2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	Information_Disclosure_Statement_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1034839 d40b1e7bd2af01a97cd0f74715cdcec3d9fa817	no	4
Warnings:					
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A U.S. Patent Number Citation or a U.S. Publication Number Citation is required in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) form for autoloading of data into USPTO systems. You may remove the form to add the required data in order to correct the Informational Message if you are citing U.S. References. If you chose not to include U.S. References, the image of the form will be processed and be made available within the Image File Wrapper (IFW) system. However, no data will be extracted from this form. Any additional data such as Foreign Patent Documents or Non Patent Literature will be manually reviewed and keyed into USPTO systems.					
3	Non Patent Literature	JPOA2016-051444Oct_4_2016.PDF	161651 5daafad928d18a8a95af06baabd472b16d9488f0	no	3
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4	Non Patent Literature	English_translation_ofJPOA2016-051444Oct_4_2016.PDF	219989 d91384d49b571db80892e089cdee2a2345ec2d2b	no	3
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			1436706		
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>					

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: 3717
For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM	Examiner: K. Hu

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed (a) within three months of the U.S. filing date of this non-CPA application, OR (b) before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits in the present application. No certification or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Olga Hernandez/
James A. Oliff
Registration No.: 27,075
Olga Hernandez
Registration No.: 58,232

JAO:OZH/vth

Date: November 17, 2016

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

U.S.PATENTS							Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²ⁱ	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
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Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.		T ⁵

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

1	December 22, 2015 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2015-131303.	×
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	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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See attached certification statement.

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A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Travis V. Howell/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2016-03-04
Name/Print	Travis V. Howell	Registration Number	73150

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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	25100343
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Suyapa Gonzalez
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	04-MAR-2016
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	09:24:14
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Transmittal Letter	Information_Disclosure_State ment.pdf	20238 d5cd47de8454b8500191635e0d70b9fd09 8cfab6	no	1

Warnings:

Information:

2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Form (SB08)	Information_Disclosure_Statement_Fillable_PDF.pdf	1034843 b8fde8286605706da824fb4db27ca7ea95fe16e5	no	4
Warnings:					
Information:					
A U.S. Patent Number Citation or a U.S. Publication Number Citation is required in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) form for autoloading of data into USPTO systems. You may remove the form to add the required data in order to correct the Informational Message if you are citing U.S. References. If you chose not to include U.S. References, the image of the form will be processed and be made available within the Image File Wrapper (IFW) system. However, no data will be extracted from this form. Any additional data such as Foreign Patent Documents or Non Patent Literature will be manually reviewed and keyed into USPTO systems.					
3	Non Patent Literature	1222.PDF	172874 ddac81f3a28573700a9e299e22d947870ea43fe5	no	3
Warnings:					
Information:					
4	Non Patent Literature	Translation_of_JP2015131303.pdf	31294 d449aab8dfccad8384187a9fe2ec68dc321bd017	no	3
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):				1259249	
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>					

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: 3717
For: GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM	Examiner: K. Hu

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed (a) within three months of the U.S. filing date of this non-CPA application, OR (b) before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits in the present application. No certification or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Travis V. Howell/
James A. Oliff
Registration No.: 27,075
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Registration No.: 58,232

JAO:TVH/OZH/smg

Date: March 4, 2016

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461

PATENT ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

Electronic Version v1.1
 Stylesheet Version v1.2

EPAS ID: PAT3626299

SUBMISSION TYPE:	NEW ASSIGNMENT
NATURE OF CONVEYANCE:	ASSIGNMENT
CONVEYING PARTY DATA	
Name	Execution Date
Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	12/10/2014
TOMOHIRO TSUKIHARA	11/06/2015
Norikazu KATO	12/10/2014
Tomoki YASUHARA	12/10/2014
RECEIVING PARTY DATA	
Name:	GREE, INC.
Street Address:	6-10-1, Roppongi, Minato-ku
City:	Tokyo
State/Country:	Japan
Postal Code:	106-6112
PROPERTY NUMBERS Total: 1	
Property Type	Number
Application Number:	14409219
CORRESPONDENCE DATA	
Fax Number:	(703)836-2787
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ATTORNEY DOCKET NUMBER:	163485
NAME OF SUBMITTER:	CYNTHIA KLINE
SIGNATURE:	/Cynthia Kline/
DATE SIGNED:	11/20/2015
	This document serves as an Oath/Declaration (37 CFR 1.63).
Total Attachments: 9	

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ASSIGNMENT (BEING FILED FOR DUAL PURPOSE UNDER 37 CFR 1.63(e))

For Application with Filing Date on or after September 16, 2012

2012年9月16日以降の日付で提出する出願における
(37 CFR 1.63(e)に基づき兼用で提出する)譲渡証

Japanese Language Assignment

(1-8) Insert Legal Name(s) of Inventor(s)

発明者の氏名を記入すること

(1) Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA

(2) Tomohiro TSUKIHARA

(3) Norikazu KATO

(4) Tomoki YASUHARA

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

各々の署名人に対して支払われた総額 1 ドル (\$1.00) および他の適切な有価約因を考慮して、各々の署名人は、その金額および他の約因を受理したこと、またその金額および他の約因が充分であることを確認し、

In consideration of the sum of one dollar (\$1.00) and other good and valuable consideration paid to each of the undersigned, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, each undersigned agrees to assign, and hereby does assign, transfer and set over to

(9) Insert Name of Assignee

譲受人氏名を記入すること

(9) GREE, Inc.

(10) Insert Address of Assignee

譲受人住所を記入すること

(10) 6-10-1, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo-106-6112, JAPAN

(以下「譲受人」と称する)、譲受人の継承人、後継者、被譲渡者、および法定代理人に対して、下記の名称の発明および仮出願、非仮出願、分割出願、継続出願、国際出願、差替え出願、および再発行出願を含む全ての特許出願に関して、また前記発明に関する全ての特許証、期間延長、再発行、再審査証に関して、(米国は米国法第 35 章第 100 条に定義されるごとく)米国に対して全ての権利、所有権、および利益を譲渡することに同意し、またここに譲渡し、移転し、また移譲し、

(hereinafter designated as the Assignee) and Assignee's heirs, successors, assigns and legal representatives, the entire right, title and interest for the United States of America as defined in 35 U.S.C. §100, in the invention, and in all applications for patent including any and all provisional, non-provisional, divisional, continuation, international, substitute and reissue application(s), and all Letters Patent, extensions, reissues and reexamination certificates that may be granted on the invention known as

(11) Insert Identification such as Title, Case Number, or Foreign Application Number

名称、事件番号、もしくは外国出願番号のような確認事項を記入のこと

(11) GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

(Attorney Docket No. 163485

), filed on even date herewith or as

(弁護士整理番号 _____) この譲渡書の提出と同日にもしくは

(12) **Alternative Identification for filed applications**

提出された出願のための代案確認事項

(12) **U.S. Application Serial Number**

右記の米国出願整理番号で
filed

上記日付において提出されたものである。

1) 各々の署名人は、前記発明に関する全ての出願およびもしくは特許に関して必要な全ての書類に署名し日付を記入することに同意し、譲受人が必要と思われる、このような出願および特許に関する別途譲渡証に署名し日付を記入することに同意する。

2) 各々の署名人は、前記発明に関する全ての出願もしくは特許に関して表明されるインターフェレンスもしくは特許発行後の検討の手続きに関して必要な全ての書類に署名し日付を記入することに同意し、証拠取得およびそのようなインターフェレンスもしくは特許発行後の検討の手続きを進行するにあたり、いかなる方法においても前記譲受人と協力することに同意する。

3) 各々の署名人は、国際工業所有権保護協定の請求もしくは規定もしくは類似協定に関して必要な全ての用紙および書類に署名し日付を記入し、必要ないかなる行為も施行することに同意する。

4) 各々の署名人は、前記譲受人に対して有効な米国特許の承認を取得し、維持し、もしくは再発行もしくは再審査により確認するために必要ないかなる行為も施行することに同意する。

5) 各々の署名人は、米国特許商標庁長官に前記出願から発生した全ての特許を、全ての利益の譲受人としての前記譲受人に対して発行することを許可および請求し、署名人はここに譲渡する全ての利益を譲渡するための全ての権利を有し、対立関係にある協定に過去に署名し日付を記入することなくもしくは将来署名し日付を記入しないことを誓約し、この協定が前記譲渡人、譲渡人の継承人、譲渡人の後継者、譲渡人の被譲渡者、および譲渡人の法定代理人に法的義務を負わせるものであることに同意する。

6) 各々の署名人は、この書類の記録上、米国特許商標庁の規定に従うために、必要もしくは所望であればこの譲渡証にさらに確認事項を記入するための権利を OLIFF PLC に付与する。

(13) **宣言書**

私は、上記に氏名を記載した発明者として、以下のとおり宣言する:

この宣言書に関わる上記出願で請求した発明の(もしくは請求した意匠の)、本来の発明者である、もしくは本来の共同の発明者であると信じる。

1) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers necessary in connection with any application and/or patent for the invention, and also to execute separate assignments in connection with such applications and patents as the Assignee may deem necessary.

2) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers necessary in connection with any interference or post-grant proceeding which may be declared concerning any application or patent for the invention and to cooperate with the Assignee in every way possible in obtaining evidence and going forward with such interference or post-grant proceeding.

3) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers and documents and perform any act which may be necessary in connection with claims or provisions of the International Convention for Protection of Industrial Property or similar agreements.

4) Each undersigned agrees to perform all affirmative acts which may be necessary to obtain, maintain or confirm by reissue or reexamination a grant of a valid United States patent to the Assignee.

5) Each undersigned authorizes and requests the Commissioner of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to issue any and all patents resulting from said application(s) to the said Assignee, as Assignee of the entire interest, and covenants that he or she has full right to convey the entire interest herein assigned, and that he or she has not executed, and will not execute, any agreement(s) in conflict herewith, and agrees that this assignment is binding on Assignor and Assignor's heirs, successors, assigns and legal representatives.

6) Each undersigned hereby grants the firm of OLIFF PLC the power to insert on this assignment any further identification that may be necessary or desirable in order to comply with the rules of the United States Patent and Trademark Office for recordation of this document.

(13) **Declaration**

As an above named inventor, I hereby declare that:

I believe I am the original inventor or an original joint inventor of a claimed invention (or claimed design) in the above-identified application for which this declaration is being submitted.

上記出願は、自己によりなされたか、もしくは自己によりなされるように許可を受けたものであった。

私は、請求項を含む上記出願の内容を検討および理解し、連邦施行規則第 37 章第 1 条第 56 項に定義されるごとく、特許性に関して重要であると認識している全ての情報を米国特許商標庁に開示すべき義務を有することを認める。

私は、この宣言書において故意に虚偽の陳述等を行った場合、米国内法第18章第1001条により、罰金もしくは最高5年の禁錮に処せられるか、またはこれらの刑が併科されることを理解する。

The application was made or authorized to be made by me.

I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified application, including the claims, and am aware of the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56.

I hereby acknowledge that any willful false statement made in this declaration is punishable under 18 U.S.C. 1001 by fine or imprisonment of not more than five (5) years, or both.

署名人覧の隣の日付をもってこの署名が履行される。

In witness whereof, executed by the undersigned on the date(s) opposite the undersigned name(s).

Date 日付	<u>December 10, 2014</u>	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	<u>吉川 毅</u> Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ Tomohiro TSUKIHARA	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ Norikazu KATO	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	<u>December 10, 2014</u>	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	<u>安原 智己</u> Tomoki YASUHARA	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____	(SEAL 印)
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____	(SEAL 印)

この譲渡証は(a)米国内で署名される際には公証人の目前で、(b)米国外で署名される際には米国領事の目前で署名されることが望ましい。(a)もしくは(b)が不可能な際には、下記に署名する少なくとも二人の証人の目前で署名されることが望ましい:

This assignment should preferably be signed before: (a) a Notary Public if within the U.S.A. (b) a U.S. Consul if outside the U.S.A. If neither, then it should be signed before at least two witnesses who also sign here:

Date 日付	_____	Witness 証人	_____
Date 日付	_____	Witness 証人	_____

ASSIGNMENT (BEING FILED FOR DUAL PURPOSE UNDER 37 CFR 1.63(e))
For Application with Filing Date on or after September 16, 2012

2012年9月16日以降の日付で提出する出願における
(37 CFR 1.63(e)に基づき兼用で提出する)譲渡証

Japanese Language Assignment

(1-8) Insert Legal Name(s) of Inventor(s)

発明者の氏名を記入すること

(1) Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA

(2) Tomohiro TSUKIHARA

(3) Norikazu KATO

(4) Tomoki YASUHARA

(5)

(6)

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(9) Insert Name of Assignee

譲受人氏名を記入すること

(9) GREE, Inc.

(10) Insert Address of Assignee

譲受人住所を記入すること

(10) 6-10-1, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-6112, JAPAN

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(11) GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

(Attorney Docket No. 163485

), filed on even date herewith or as

(弁護士整理番号 _____) この譲渡書の提出と同一日にもしくは

(12) **Alternative Identification for filed applications**

提出された出願のための代案確認事項

(12) U.S. Application Serial Number

右記の米国出願整理番号で _____
filed

上記日付において提出されたものである。

1) 各々の署名人は、前記発明に関する全ての出願および/もしくは特許に関して必要な全ての書類に署名し日付を記入することに同意し、譲受人が必要と思われる、このような出願および特許に関する別途譲渡証に署名し日付を記入することに同意する。

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(13) **宣言書**

私は、上記に氏名を記載した発明者として、以下のとおり宣言する:

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1) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers necessary in connection with any application and/or patent for the invention, and also to execute separate assignments in connection with such applications and patents as the Assignee may deem necessary.

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5) Each undersigned authorizes and requests the Commissioner of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to issue any and all patents resulting from said application(s) to the said Assignee, as Assignee of the entire interest, and covenants that he or she has full right to convey the entire interest herein assigned, and that he or she has not executed, and will not execute, any agreement(s) in conflict herewith, and agrees that this assignment is binding on Assignor and Assignor's heirs, successors, assigns and legal representatives.

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(13) **Declaration**

As an above named inventor, I hereby declare that:

I believe I am the original inventor or an original joint inventor of a claimed invention (or claimed design) in the above-identified application for which this declaration is being submitted.

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署名人覧の隣の日付をもってこの署名が履行される。

In witness whereof, executed by the undersigned on the date(s) opposite the undersigned name(s).

Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Tomohiro TSUKIHARA 印
Date 日付	December 10, 2014	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL)  Norikazu KATO 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Tomoki YASUHARA 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印

この譲渡証は(a)米国内で署名される際には公証人の目前で、(b)米国外で署名される際には米国領事の目前で署名されることが望ましい。(a)もしくは(b)が不可能な際には、下記に署名する少なくとも二人の証人の目前で署名されることが望ましい:

This assignment should preferably be signed before: (a) a Notary Public if within the U.S.A. (b) a U.S. Consul if outside the U.S.A. If neither, then it should be signed before at least two witnesses who also sign here:

Date 日付	_____	Witness 証人	_____
Date 日付	_____	Witness 証人	_____

ASSIGNMENT (BEING FILED FOR DUAL PURPOSE UNDER 37 CFR 1.63(e))
For Application with Filing Date on or after September 16, 2012

2012年9月16日以降の日付で提出する出願における
(37 CFR 1.63(e)に基づき兼用で提出する)譲渡証

Japanese Language Assignment

(1-8) Insert Legal Name(s) of Inventor(s)

発明者の氏名を記入すること

(1) Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA

(2) Tomohiro TSUKIHARA

(3) Norikazu KATO

(4) Tomoki YASUHARA

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

各々の署名人に対して支払われた総額 1 ドル (\$1.00) および他の適切な有価約因を考慮して、各々の署名人は、その金額および他の約因を受領したこと、またその金額および他の約因が充分であることを確認し、

In consideration of the sum of one dollar (\$1.00) and other good and valuable consideration paid to each of the undersigned, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, each undersigned agrees to assign, and hereby does assign, transfer and set over to

(9) Insert Name of Assignee

譲受人氏名を記入すること

(9) GREE, Inc.

(10) Insert Address of Assignee

譲受人住所を記入すること

(10) 6-10-1, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-6112, JAPAN

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(11) Insert Identification such as Title, Case Number, or Foreign Application Number

名称、事件番号、もしくは外国出願番号のような確認事項を記入のこと

(11) GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

(Attorney Docket No. 163485

), filed on even date herewith or as

(弁護士整理番号 _____)この譲渡書の提出と同日にもしくは

(12) **Alternative Identification for filed applications**

提出された出願のための代案確認事項

(12) U.S. Application Serial Number

右記の米国出願整理番号で _____
filed

上記日付において提出されたものである。

1) 各々の署名人は、前記発明に関する全ての出願および/もしくは特許に関して必要な全ての書類に署名し日付を記入することに同意し、譲受人が必要と思われる、このような出願および特許に関しての別途譲渡証に署名し日付を記入することに同意する。

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(13) **宣言書**

私は、上記に氏名を記載した発明者として、以下のとおり宣言する：

この宣言書に関わる上記出願で請求した発明の(もしくは請求した意匠の)、本来の発明者である、もしくは本来の共同の発明者であると信じる。

1) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers necessary in connection with any application and/or patent for the invention, and also to execute separate assignments in connection with such applications and patents as the Assignee may deem necessary.

2) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers necessary in connection with any interference or post-grant proceeding which may be declared concerning any application or patent for the invention and to cooperate with the Assignee in every way possible in obtaining evidence and going forward with such interference or post-grant proceeding.

3) Each undersigned agrees to execute all papers and documents and perform any act which may be necessary in connection with claims or provisions of the International Convention for Protection of Industrial Property or similar agreements.

4) Each undersigned agrees to perform all affirmative acts which may be necessary to obtain, maintain or confirm by reissue or reexamination a grant of a valid United States patent to the Assignee.

5) Each undersigned authorizes and requests the Commissioner of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to issue any and all patents resulting from said application(s) to the said Assignee, as Assignee of the entire interest, and covenants that he or she has full right to convey the entire interest herein assigned, and that he or she has not executed, and will not execute, any agreement(s) in conflict herewith, and agrees that this assignment is binding on Assignor and Assignor's heirs, successors, assigns and legal representatives.

6) Each undersigned hereby grants the firm of OLIFF PLC the power to insert on this assignment any further identification that may be necessary or desirable in order to comply with the rules of the United States Patent and Trademark Office for recordation of this document.

(13) **Declaration**

As an above named inventor, I hereby declare that:

I believe I am the original inventor or an original joint inventor of a claimed invention (or claimed design) in the above-identified application for which this declaration is being submitted.

上記出願は、自己によりなされたか、もしくは自己によりなされるように許可を受けたものであった。

私は、請求項を含む上記出願の内容を検討および理解し、連邦施行規則第 37 章第 1 条第 56 項に定義されるごとく、特許性に関して重要であると認識している全ての情報を米国特許商標庁に開示すべき義務を有することを認める。

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The application was made or authorized to be made by me.

I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified application, including the claims, and am aware of the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR §1.56.

I hereby acknowledge that any willful false statement made in this declaration is punishable under 18 U.S.C. 1001 by fine or imprisonment of not more than five (5) years, or both.

署名人覧の隣の日付をもってこの署名が履行される。

In witness whereof, executed by the undersigned on the date(s) opposite the undersigned name(s).

Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA 印
Date 日付	November 6, 2015	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL)  Tomohiro TSUKIHARA 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Norikazu KATO 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) Tomoki YASUHARA 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印
Date 日付	_____	Inventor Signature 発明者署名	_____ (SEAL) 印

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This assignment should preferably be signed before: (a) a Notary Public if within the U.S.A. (b) a U.S. Consul if outside the U.S.A. If neither, then it should be signed before at least two witnesses who also sign here:

Date 日付	_____	Witness 証人	_____
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Table with 4 columns: APPLICATION NUMBER (14/409,219), FILING OR 371(C) DATE (12/18/2014), FIRST NAMED APPLICANT (Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa), ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE (163485)

CONFIRMATION NO. 7235

PUBLICATION NOTICE



25944
OLIFF PLC
P.O. BOX 320850
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850

Title:GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

Publication No.US-2015-0165318-A1

Publication Date:06/18/2015

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The above-identified application will be electronically published as a patent application publication pursuant to 37 CFR 1.211, et seq. The patent application publication number and publication date are set forth above.

The publication may be accessed through the USPTO's publically available Searchable Databases via the Internet at www.uspto.gov. The direct link to access the publication is currently http://www.uspto.gov/patft/.

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit		3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu	
	Attorney Docket Number		163485

	1	February 3, 2015 Office Action issued in Japanese Patent Application No. 2014-208126.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	3717
	Examiner Name	K. Hu
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Todd M. Guise/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2015-05-07
Name/Print	Todd M. Guise	Registration Number	46748

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt	
EFS ID:	22281192
Application Number:	14409219
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	7235
Title of Invention:	GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa
Customer Number:	25944
Filer:	James Albert Oliff/Jessica Li
Filer Authorized By:	James Albert Oliff
Attorney Docket Number:	163485
Receipt Date:	07-MAY-2015
Filing Date:	18-DEC-2014
Time Stamp:	13:16:52
Application Type:	U.S. National Stage under 35 USC 371

Payment information:

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Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
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2	Non Patent Literature	2015050602-03-15_OA_JP2014-208126.pdf	1770595 06ec8c0fd4e5a28726993c651a5d3c090871585	no	5
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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.

Attorney Docket No.: 163485

Application No.: 14/409,219

Confirmation No.: 7235

Filed: December 18, 2014

Art Unit: 3717

For: Game Control Method, Game Server, And
Program

Examiner: K. Hu

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the reference(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed (a) within three months of the U.S. filing date of this non-CPA application, OR (b) before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits in the present application. No certification or fee is required.

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Todd M. Guise/
James A. Oliff
Registration No.: 27,075
Todd M. Guise
Registration No.: 46,748
Travis V. Howell
Registration No.: 73,150

JAO:TMG/TVH/yzl

Date: May 7, 2015

OLIFF PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry of this filing; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

Table with 3 columns: U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER NO. (14/409,219), FIRST NAMED INVENTOR (Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa), ATTY. DOCKET NO. (163485). Includes fields for INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. (PCT/JP2013/003899), I.A. FILING DATE (06/21/2013), and PRIORITY DATE (06/21/2012).

25944
OLIFF PLC
P.O. BOX 320850
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850

CONFIRMATION NO. 7235
371 ACCEPTANCE LETTER



Date Mailed: 03/11/2015

NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATION UNDER 35 U.S.C 371 AND 37 CFR 1.495

The applicant is hereby advised that the United States Patent and Trademark Office, in its capacity as a Designated / Elected Office (37 CFR 1.495), has ACCEPTED the above identified international application for national patentability examination in the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

The United States Application Number assigned to the application is shown above. A Filing Receipt will be issued for the present application in due course. THE DATE APPEARING ON THE FILING RECEIPT AS THE "FILING DATE or 371(c) DATE" IS THE DATE ON WHICH THE LAST OF THE 35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(1) and (c)(2) REQUIREMENTS HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN THE OFFICE. THIS DATE IS SHOWN BELOW. The filing date of the above identified application is the international filing date of the international application (Article 11(3) and 35 U.S.C. 363)

12/18/2014
DATE OF RECEIPT OF 35 U.S.C.
371(c)(1) and (c)(2) REQUIREMENTS

The following items have been received:

- Copy of the International Application filed on 12/18/2014
• English Translation of the IA filed on 12/18/2014
• Copy of the International Search Report filed on 12/18/2014
• Preliminary Amendments filed on 12/18/2014
• Information Disclosure Statements filed on 01/08/2015
• U.S. Basic National Fees filed on 12/18/2014
• Priority Documents filed on 12/18/2014
• Power of Attorney filed on 12/18/2014
• Authorization to Permit Access filed on 12/18/2014
• Application Data Sheet (37 CFR 1.76) filed on 12/18/2014

Applicant is notified that the above-identified application contains the deficiencies noted below. No period for reply is set forth in this notice for correction of these deficiencies. However, if a deficiency relates to the inventor's oath or declaration, the applicant must file an oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.63, or a substitute statement in compliance with 37 CFR 1.64, executed by or with respect to each actual inventor no later than the expiration of the time period set in the "Notice of Allowability" to avoid abandonment. See 37 CFR 1.495(c).

- Properly executed inventor's oath or declaration for the following inventor(s) has not been submitted:
Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa, Tomohiro Tsukihara, Norikazu Kato, and Tomoki Yasuhara

Applicant is reminded that any communications to the United States Patent and Trademark Office must be mailed to the address given in the heading and include the U.S. application no. shown above (37 CFR 1.5)

KAREN M WILLIAMS

Telephone: (571) 272-9075



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

Table with 8 columns: APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING or 371(c) DATE, GRP ART UNIT, FIL FEE REC'D, ATTY. DOCKET NO, TOT CLAIMS, IND CLAIMS. Values: 14/409,219, 12/18/2014, 1620, 163485, 15, 3

CONFIRMATION NO. 7235

FILING RECEIPT

25944
OLIFF PLC
P.O. BOX 320850
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320-4850



Date Mailed: 03/11/2015

Receipt is acknowledged of this non-provisional patent application. The application will be taken up for examination in due course. Applicant will be notified as to the results of the examination. Any correspondence concerning the application must include the following identification information: the U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING DATE, NAME OF APPLICANT, and TITLE OF INVENTION. Fees transmitted by check or draft are subject to collection. Please verify the accuracy of the data presented on this receipt. If an error is noted on this Filing Receipt, please submit a written request for a Filing Receipt Correction. Please provide a copy of this Filing Receipt with the changes noted thereon. If you received a "Notice to File Missing Parts" for this application, please submit any corrections to this Filing Receipt with your reply to the Notice. When the USPTO processes the reply to the Notice, the USPTO will generate another Filing Receipt incorporating the requested corrections

Inventor(s)

Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
Tomohiro Tsukihara, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
Norikazu Kato, Minato-ku, JAPAN;
Tomoki Yasuhara, Minato-ku, JAPAN;

Applicant(s)

GREE, INC., Minato-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

Power of Attorney: The patent practitioners associated with Customer Number 25944

Domestic Priority data as claimed by applicant

This application is a 371 of PCT/JP2013/003899 06/21/2013

Foreign Applications (You may be eligible to benefit from the Patent Prosecution Highway program at the USPTO. Please see http://www.uspto.gov for more information.)

JAPAN 2012-140213 06/21/2012

Permission to Access - A proper Authorization to Permit Access to Application by Participating Offices (PTO/SB/39 or its equivalent) has been received by the USPTO.

If Required, Foreign Filing License Granted: 03/05/2015

The country code and number of your priority application, to be used for filing abroad under the Paris Convention, is US 14/409,219

Projected Publication Date: 06/18/2015

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

Title

GAME CONTROL METHOD, GAME SERVER, AND PROGRAM

Preliminary Class

Statement under 37 CFR 1.55 or 1.78 for AIA (First Inventor to File) Transition Applications: No

PROTECTING YOUR INVENTION OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Since the rights granted by a U.S. patent extend only throughout the territory of the United States and have no effect in a foreign country, an inventor who wishes patent protection in another country must apply for a patent in a specific country or in regional patent offices. Applicants may wish to consider the filing of an international application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). An international (PCT) application generally has the same effect as a regular national patent application in each PCT-member country. The PCT process **simplifies** the filing of patent applications on the same invention in member countries, but **does not result** in a grant of "an international patent" and does not eliminate the need of applicants to file additional documents and fees in countries where patent protection is desired.

Almost every country has its own patent law, and a person desiring a patent in a particular country must make an application for patent in that country in accordance with its particular laws. Since the laws of many countries differ in various respects from the patent law of the United States, applicants are advised to seek guidance from specific foreign countries to ensure that patent rights are not lost prematurely.

Applicants also are advised that in the case of inventions made in the United States, the Director of the USPTO must issue a license before applicants can apply for a patent in a foreign country. The filing of a U.S. patent application serves as a request for a foreign filing license. The application's filing receipt contains further information and guidance as to the status of applicant's license for foreign filing.

Applicants may wish to consult the USPTO booklet, "General Information Concerning Patents" (specifically, the section entitled "Treaties and Foreign Patents") for more information on timeframes and deadlines for filing foreign patent applications. The guide is available either by contacting the USPTO Contact Center at 800-786-9199, or it can be viewed on the USPTO website at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/doc/general/index.html>.

For information on preventing theft of your intellectual property (patents, trademarks and copyrights), you may wish to consult the U.S. Government website, <http://www.stopfakes.gov>. Part of a Department of Commerce initiative, this website includes self-help "toolkits" giving innovators guidance on how to protect intellectual property in specific countries such as China, Korea and Mexico. For questions regarding patent enforcement issues, applicants may call the U.S. Government hotline at 1-866-999-HALT (1-866-999-4258).

LICENSE FOR FOREIGN FILING UNDER

Title 35, United States Code, Section 184

Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 5.11 & 5.15

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This license is to be retained by the licensee and may be used at any time on or after the effective date thereof unless it is revoked. This license is automatically transferred to any related applications(s) filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d). This license is not retroactive.

The grant of a license does not in any way lessen the responsibility of a licensee for the security of the subject matter as imposed by any Government contract or the provisions of existing laws relating to espionage and the national security or the export of technical data. Licensees should apprise themselves of current regulations especially with respect to certain countries, of other agencies, particularly the Office of Defense Trade Controls, Department of State (with respect to Arms, Munitions and Implements of War (22 CFR 121-128)); the Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce (15 CFR parts 730-774); the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury (31 CFR Parts 500+) and the Department of Energy.

NOT GRANTED

No license under 35 U.S.C. 184 has been granted at this time, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" DOES NOT appear on this form. Applicant may still petition for a license under 37 CFR 5.12, if a license is desired before the expiration of 6 months from the filing date of the application. If 6 months has lapsed from the filing date of this application and the licensee has not received any indication of a secrecy order under 35 U.S.C. 181, the licensee may foreign file the application pursuant to 37 CFR 5.15(b).

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The United States represents the largest, most dynamic marketplace in the world and is an unparalleled location for business investment, innovation, and commercialization of new technologies. The U.S. offers tremendous resources and advantages for those who invest and manufacture goods here. Through SelectUSA, our nation works to promote and facilitate business investment. SelectUSA provides information assistance to the international investor community; serves as an ombudsman for existing and potential investors; advocates on behalf of U.S. cities, states, and regions competing for global investment; and counsels U.S. economic development organizations on investment attraction best practices. To learn more about why the United States is the best country in the world to develop technology, manufacture products, deliver services, and grow your business, visit <http://www.SelectUSA.gov> or call +1-202-482-6800.

PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD
Substitute for Form PTO-875

Application or Docket Number
14/409,219

APPLICATION AS FILED - PART I

(Column 1)		(Column 2)	SMALL ENTITY		OR	OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE(\$)	FEE(\$)		RATE(\$)	FEE(\$)
BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	280
SEARCH FEE (37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	480
EXAMINATION FEE (37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A	720
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(i))	15	minus 20 = *				x 80 =	0.00
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(h))	3	minus 3 = *				x 420 =	0.00
APPLICATION SIZE FEE (37 CFR 1.16(s))	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).						0.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT (37 CFR 1.16(j))							0.00
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.			TOTAL			TOTAL	1480

APPLICATION AS AMENDED - PART II

(Column 1)		(Column 2)	(Column 3)	SMALL ENTITY		OR	OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
AMENDMENT A	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	RATE(\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE(\$)		RATE(\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE(\$)
Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus	**	x	=		x	=
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus	***	x	=		x	=
Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))								
FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))								
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE			TOTAL ADD'L FEE	
AMENDMENT B	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	RATE(\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE(\$)		RATE(\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE(\$)
Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus	**	x	=		x	=
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus	***	x	=		x	=
Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))								
FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))								
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE			TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".
 The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest found in the appropriate box in column 1.

MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM FEE CALCULATION SHEET Substitute for Form PTO-1360 (For use with Form PTO/SB/06)							Application Number 14409219		Filing Date				
							Applicant(s) Tsuyoshi Yoshikawa						
							* May be used for additional claims or amendments						
CLAIMS	AS FILED		AFTER FIRST AMENDMENT		AFTER SECOND AMENDMENT			*		*		*	
	Indep	Depend	Indep	Depend	Indep	Depend		Indep	Depend	Indep	Depend	Indep	Depend
1	1		1										
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Total Indep	3		3		0								
Total Depend	18	←	12	←	0	←							
Total Claims	21		15		0								
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PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 14/409,219	Filing Date 12/18/2014	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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ENTITY: LARGE SMALL MICRO

APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I

FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA		RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE (37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE (37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(i))	minus 20 =	*		X \$ =	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(h))	minus 3 =	*		X \$ =	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE (37 CFR 1.16(s))	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$310 (\$155 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).				
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.				TOTAL	

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT	03/11/2015	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	* 15	Minus ** 20	= 0	X \$80 =	0
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	* 3	Minus ***3	= 0	X \$420 =	0
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)		RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
AMENDMENT		CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA		
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus **	=	X \$ =	
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus ***	=	X \$ =	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))					
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))					
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

LIE
/DEANNA RORIE/

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
 If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	N/A
	Examiner Name	Not Yet Assigned
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear		
	1							
If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.							Add	
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear		
	1	20110294558	A1	2011-12-01	Kim			
	2	20030008710	A1	2003-01-09	Yamaoka et al.			
	3	20050282634	A1	2005-12-22	Yamada et al.			
	4	20140038716	A1	2014-02-06	Endo			
If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.							Add	
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS							Remove	
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² j	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219	
	Filing Date		2014-12-18	
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA		
	Art Unit	N/A		
	Examiner Name	Not Yet Assigned		
	Attorney Docket Number	163485		

1	2002-236773	JP	A	2002-08-23	Dainippon Printing Co Ltd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	2002-366852	JP	A	2002-12-20	Hiitoshinku Kk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	2001-353371	JP	A	2001-12-25	Konami Co Ltd,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	2003-019356	JP	A	2003-01-21	Konami Comp Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	2003-154172	JP	A	2003-05-27	Konami Co Ltd,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	2005-318995	JP	A	2005-11-17	Nintendo Co Ltd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	2013-027477	JP	A	2013-02-07	Konami, Digital Entertainment Co Ltd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	2003-016333	JP	A	2003-01-17	Sharp Kk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	2008-220984	JP	A	2008-09-25	Nintendo Co Ltd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		14409219
	Filing Date		2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA	
	Art Unit	N/A	
	Examiner Name	Not Yet Assigned	
	Attorney Docket Number	163485	

1	September 10, 2013 International Search Report issued in Application No. PCT/JP2013/003899.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	March 11, 2014 Japanese Office Action issued in Application No. 2013-544606.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	March 11, 2014 Japanese Office Action issued in Application No. 2014-007086.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	June 10, 2014 Japanese Office Action issued in Application No. 2013-544606.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	September 16, 2014 Japanese Office Action issued in Application No. 2014-142613.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	November 19, 2013 Japanese Office Action issued in Application No. 2013-544606.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Social Game Review 7: Social Gacha's payment encouragement scheme has overwhelmed network games [online], GameCast iPhone, February 11, 2012, (with partial translation).	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	"POWER PRO KUN POCKET 14 OFFICIAL COMPLETE GUIDE", Enterbrain, 1st Edition, page 157, February 22, 2012, (with partial translation).	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	"DENGEKI!!! YOEN KUNOICHI", Appli Fan, Cosmic Publishing, Vol. 2, pages 116-117, April 15, 2012.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	"WONDER LIFE SPECIAL, NINTENDO OFFICIAL GUIDEBOOK, POKEMON XD, GALE OF DARKNESS, DARK LUGIA", Shogakukan Inc., 1st Edition, page 152, October 1, 2005.	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button Add		

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	N/A
	Examiner Name	Not Yet Assigned
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

EXAMINER SIGNATURE			
Examiner Signature			Date Considered
*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.			
<small> ¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached. </small>			

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	14409219
	Filing Date	2014-12-18
	First Named Inventor	Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA
	Art Unit	N/A
	Examiner Name	Not Yet Assigned
	Attorney Docket Number	163485

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Todd M. Guise/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2015-01-08
Name/Print	Todd M. Guise	Registration Number	46748

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

<hr/> In re Patent Application of: Tsuyoshi YOSHIKAWA et al.	Attorney Docket No.: 163485
Application No.: 14/409,219	Confirmation No.: 7235
Filed: December 18, 2014	Art Unit: N/A
For: Game Control Method, Game Server, And Program	Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.56, the attention of the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby directed to the reference(s) listed on the attached PTO/SB/08 Form. Unless otherwise indicated herein, one copy of each item(s) is attached. It is respectfully requested that the information be expressly considered during the prosecution of this application, and that the references(s) be made of record therein and appear among the "References Cited" on any patent to issue therefrom.

1. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed (a) within three months of the U.S. filing date of this non-CPA application, OR (b) before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits in the present application. No certification or fee is required.

2. With respect to the following foreign language documents, for which a translation is not submitted:

NPL Cite No	Abstract Provided	Discussed in	Discussed in	Corresponds to
7	<input type="checkbox"/>		NPL. cites <u>2, 4</u>	
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9	<input type="checkbox"/>		NPL. cite <u>5</u>	
10	<input type="checkbox"/>		NPL. cite <u>5</u>	

Respectfully submitted,

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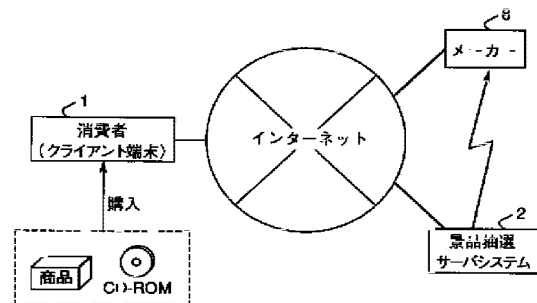
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(54) 【発明の名称】 景品抽選サーバシステム

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 景品抽選サーバシステムを利用して、販売促進効果を高め、消費者情報を効率よく獲得する。

【解決手段】 商品に付随して配布されるCD-ROMに記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードを、アタリまたはハズレの情報と対応させて景品抽選サーバシステム2のデータベースに登録する。景品抽選サーバシステム2は、CD-ROMを読み込んだクライアント端末1からのアクセスがあったとき、データベース内の識別コードと、CD-ROMに記録された識別コードと、からアタリまたはハズレを判定する。景品抽選サーバシステム2は、判定結果をブラウザ画面上に表示し、景品発送先に関する情報とともに消費者情報を獲得する。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 商品に付随して配布される記録媒体に記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードを、アタリまたはハズレの情報と対応させて記憶した判定データベース(21)と、

上記記録媒体を読み込んだクライアント端末からのアクセスがあったとき、判定データベース内の識別コードと、記録媒体に記録された識別コードと、からアタリまたはハズレを判定して、その結果をクライアント端末のブラウザ画面上に表示する当選判定手段(203)と、を備えたことを特徴とする、景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項2】 商品に付随して配布される記録媒体に記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードを、所定のビンゴカード情報と対応させて記憶するとともに、ビンゴカード上で揃った列数と当選内容とを関連付けて記憶したビンゴカードデータベース(31)と、

上記記録媒体を読み込んだクライアント端末からのアクセスがあったとき、ビンゴカードデータベース内の当該識別コードに対応するビンゴカードをブラウザ画面上に表示するビンゴカード表示手段(303)と、

ブラウザ画面上からの要求を受けて、乱数を利用して所定個数のナンバーを選択してブラウザ画面上に表示する乱数発生手段(304)と、

乱数発生手段により選択されたナンバーとビンゴカード情報とから、対応する当選内容をビンゴカードデータベースからの検索して、その結果をブラウザ画面上に表示する当選判定手段(305)と、を備えたことを特徴とする、景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項3】 上記ビンゴカードデータベースは、識別コードに対応させてゲーム回数を記憶しており、

当該ゲーム回数と、クライアント端末からのアクセス回数と、を比較し、アクセス回数がゲーム回数以下である場合にのみ、上記ビンゴカード表示手段によるビンゴカード表示を許容する回数判定手段(307)をさらに備えたことを特徴とする、請求項2記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項4】 商品に付随して配布される記録媒体に記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードを、所定のスクラッチカード情報と対応させて記憶するとともに、スクラッチカード上での選択結果と当選内容とを関連付けて記憶したスクラッチカードデータベース(41)と、

上記記録媒体を読み込んだクライアント端末からのアクセスがあったとき、スクラッチカードデータベース内の当該識別コードに対応するスクラッチカードをブラウザ画面上に表示するスクラッチカード表示手段(403)と、ブラウザ画面上に表示したスクラッチカード上の所定箇所をユーザが選択したことを受けて、当該選択結果に対応する当選内容をスクラッチカードデータベースから検索して、その結果をブラウザ画面上に表示する当選判定手段(404)と、を備えたことを特徴とする、景品抽選サーバシステム。

サーバシステム。

【請求項5】 上記スクラッチデータベースは、識別コードに対応させてゲーム回数を記憶しており、当該ゲーム回数と、クライアント端末からのアクセス回数と、を比較し、アクセス回数がゲーム回数以下である場合にのみ、上記スクラッチカード表示手段によるスクラッチカード表示を許容する回数判定手段(406)をさらに備えたことを特徴とする、請求項4記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項6】 上記記録媒体には景品抽選サーバシステムのURLが記録されており、記録媒体を装着されたクライアント端末が、同記録媒体内のURLを読み込んで自動的に景品抽選サーバシステムにアクセスすることを特徴とする、請求項1～5のいずれか1つに記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項7】 当選者による景品申込用画面を記憶した当選者受付データベース(23、33、43)と、上記当選判定手段により当選が判定された場合、ブラウザ画面上からの要求を受けて、ブラウザ画面上に景品申込用画面を表示する当選者受付手段(204、306、405)をさらに備えたことを特徴とする、請求項1～6のいずれか1つに記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項8】 上記景品申込用画面には、消費者情報獲得のためのアンケート項目が設定されていることを特徴とする、請求項7記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【請求項9】 上記記録媒体がCD-ROMであることを特徴とする、請求項1～8のいずれか1つに記載の景品抽選サーバシステム。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、インターネット、ローカルエリアネットワーク、その他のネットワークで利用できる景品抽選サーバシステムに関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】従来より、商品の販売促進や消費者情報獲得等のため、例えば、応募シールを貼付した商品を販売することが行なわれていた。すなわち、応募シールが付された商品を購入した消費者は、申込用紙の所定アンケート項目に記入を行なうとともに応募シールを貼付して応募することで、抽選により景品を取得できる。

【0003】しかしながら、上記方法では、応募から当選結果の判明までに数週間から数ヶ月を要するため、販売促進効果として十分ではなく、その結果、消費者情報の獲得についても、決して満足できるものではない。また、上記方法では、申込用紙の受付処理、およびそこには記載された消費者情報のデータベースへの登録、さらには抽選を手で行なうこととなるが、作業が煩雑でかなりの手間がかかる。

【0004】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】かかる現状に鑑みて、

本発明は、以下の特徴を備えた景品抽選サーバシステムを提供することを目的としている。

【0005】

【課題を解決するための手段 作用 効果】本発明においては、商品にCD-ROM等の記録媒体を付随させて消費者に配布する。この場合、例えば音楽CDのように、商品自体が記録媒体であってもよく、そのような場合も「商品に付随させる」の概念に含まれる。

【0006】各記録媒体には識別コードを記録しておき、これと同一の識別コードと関連付けたゲーム権や当選内容に関する情報を、景品抽選サーバシステム内のデータベースに記録する。商品を購入した消費者は、添付されていた記録媒体を自己の所有するパソコンや店頭の端末機等のクライアント端末に読み込ませて、景品抽選サーバシステム内に設定された懸賞サイトにアクセスする。

【0007】本発明において、識別コードとは、データベース内の情報と個々の記録媒体とを関連付けることのできる何らかの情報であればよい。

【0008】消費者は、懸賞サイトにおいて、自己の記録媒体の「アタリ ハズレ」を確認し、または、所定のゲームを行なって、その結果としての当選内容を確認する。このように、景品抽選サーバシステムを使用すれば、消費者は景品の抽選結果を短時間で知ることができるので、販売促進効果を高めることが期待できる。また、商品メーカー側における応募用紙受付処理および抽選も不要となる。

【0009】当選者が景品を受け取る方法としては、当選者が景品の発送先等を郵便やFAXで連絡することも考えられるが、クライアント端末に景品申込用画面を表示し、そこから情報を送信することが好ましい。なお、景品申込用画面では、所定のアンケート項目を設けることが好ましく、当選者によるアンケート結果を景品抽選サーバシステム内のデータベースに記録しておくことで、商品メーカーは、消費者情報を獲得することができる。

【0010】なお、景品としては、郵送等が必要となる「物」に限られず、音楽データ等をネットワークを通じて配信するようなものであってもよい。この場合には、クライアント端末からアドレス情報を景品抽選サーバシステムに送信する。

【0011】

【発明の実施の形態】本発明の実施形態を添付の図面を参照して以下に詳細に説明する。以下の実施形態では、記録媒体としてCD-ROMを採用しているが、本発明においては、CD-ROMに限らず適当な記録媒体を用いることが可能である。

【0012】システムの全体図

図1は、本発明の景品抽選サーバシステムを利用した商品販売の全体を例示的に示している。消費者が店舗等で

購入した商品には、CD-ROMが添付されている。なお、商品自体がCD-ROM(例えば、音楽CD)であってもよい。消費者は、自己が所有するパソコン、店頭設置された端末機、その他のクライアント端末1にCD-ROMをセットして、景品抽選サーバシステム2内の懸賞サイトにアクセスする。また、CD-ROM以外の小型媒体を利用すれば、携帯電話等から懸賞サイトにアクセスすることもできる。

【0013】なお、記録媒体には景品抽選サーバシステムのURLが記録してあり、記録媒体をクライアント端末に装着したときに、URLが自動的に読み込まれて、景品抽選サーバシステムへのアクセスが行なわれる。

【0014】CD-ROMには「アタリ」と「ハズレ」が設定されている。または、CD-ROMに一種のゲーム権が付与されており、消費者は、懸賞サイトでゲームを行ない、その結果次第で景品を獲得することができる。

【0015】CD-ROMがアタリであった場合、またはゲームの結果、当選となった場合には、クライアント端末1のブラウザ画面に当選者用の申込画面(不図示)が表示され、当選者は、これに景品の発送先等を含めた所定のアンケートに答えて、景品抽選サーバシステム2に送信し、この情報がサーバシステム2内のデータベースに記録される。

【0016】数日後、当選者には景品が発送され、商品メーカー8には、上記アンケート結果に基づく消費者情報が提供される。なお、景品は、郵送等で当選者に届けられる商品であっても、インターネットを介して配信される音楽データ等であってもよい。メーカー8は、インターネットを介して、あるいは郵送、FAX、その他の手段で、消費者情報を獲得することができる。

【0017】なお、図ではインターネットを利用した例を示しているが、一般的に言われるインターネットに限らず、iモード(商標)や所定地域におけるローカルエリアネットワーク等の種々のネットワークにおいて、景品抽選サーバシステム2を使用することができる。

【0018】景品抽選サーバシステムの第1実施形態(図2～図4)

図2は、景品抽選サーバシステム2を示している。景品抽選サーバシステム2は、判定データベース21、プログラムデータベース22、および当選者受付データベース23を備える。サーバシステムの制御手段201はCPU等から構成されており、制御手段201がプログラムデータベース22に記録された各種プログラムを実行することで、WWWサーバ手段202、当選判定手段203、当選者受付手段204の各機能が実現される。

【0019】この実施形態では、CD-ROM自体に「アタリ」または「ハズレ」が設定されていて、商品に添付して配布されたCD-ROM内に記録した識別コードと同一の識別コードが、アタリ ハズレの情報と関連

付けて、判定データベース21内に記録されている。なお、「識別コード」とは、判定データベース21内のアタリ ハズレ情報と、個々のCD-ROMとを関連付けられるような何らかの情報であればよい。

【0020】当選者受付データベース23には、当選者が景品の発送先やアンケートに対する回答等を入力する画面情報が記録されている他、当該画面に当選者が入力した情報が記録される。

【0021】CD-ROMが「アタリ」であるか「ハズレ」であるかは、例えば、CD-ROM自体の色や、CD-ROMに施した印刷等で表示してもよいし、CD-ROM内に記録したデータによって表示してもよい。前者の場合、消費者は、CD-ROMを包装する袋を破った時点でアタリ ハズレを知ることができる。後者の場合、消費者は、CD-ROMをパソコンにセットした後パソコン画面上で、または景品抽選サーバシステム2内の懸賞サイトにアクセスした時点でアタリ ハズレを知ることができる。

【0022】図3は、消費者が商品を購入してから、景品を獲得するまでの手順を示すフローチャートである。

【0023】購入した商品に添付されたCD-ROMをパソコンにセットすると、CD-ROMに記録されたトップ画面10(図4参照)が自動的にブラウザに表示される(#10→11)。CD-ROMには、懸賞サイトのURLが記録されており、図4のトップ画面10上で「Enter」部分をクリックすると、パソコンがインターネットに接続され、景品抽選サーバシステム2内に設定された懸賞サイトへアクセスする(#12)。

【0024】景品抽選サーバシステム2内では、CD-ROMを読み込んだクライアント端末1からのアクセスがあると、当選判定手段203が当該CD-ROM内に記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードを判定データベース21から検索し、そこに関連付けられたアタリ ハズレ情報を取得して、アタリ ハズレの判定を行なう(#13→14)。そして、当選判定手段203は、これに対応するアタリ画面またはハズレ画面(いずれも図示せず)をクライアント端末1のブラウザ画面上に表示する。なお、アタリ画面では、場合により、1等、2等、3等などの情報も表示することが好ましい。

【0025】アタリ画面を通じて、当選者から応募の要求があると、景品抽選サーバシステム2の当選者受付手段204は、不図示の景品申込画面をブラウザに表示する。当選者は、当該画面に景品発送先の住所(または、配信先のアドレス)や所定のアンケートに対する回答を入力して、景品抽選サーバシステム2に送信する(#15)。これらの情報は、当選者受付データベース23内に記録される。

【0026】景品抽選サーバシステムの第2実施形態(図5～図9)。

図5は、第2実施形態に係る景品抽選サーバシステム3

を示している。景品抽選サーバシステム3は、ビンゴカードデータベース31、プログラムデータベース32、および当選者受付データベース33を備える。サーバシステムの制御手段301はCPU等から構成されており、制御手段301がプログラムデータベース32に記録された各種プログラムを実行することで、WWWサーバ手段302、ビンゴカード表示手段303、乱数発生手段304、当選判定手段305、当選者受付手段306、回数判定手段307の各機能が実現される。

【0027】この実施形態では、CD-ROM内に記録した識別コードと同一の識別コードが、ビンゴカード情報と関連付けて、ビンゴカードデータベース31内に記録されている。なお、「識別コード」とは、ビンゴカードデータベース31内のビンゴカード情報と、個々のCD-ROMとを関連付けられるような何らかの情報であればよい。

【0028】ビンゴカード情報とは、現実のビンゴカードのように、マトリックス状に配置された所定個数のナンバーを記録した情報である。各消費者の手持ちのナンバーおよび配列等は、CD-ROMの識別コードによって固有になっている。つまり、消費者は、商品に添付されていた1枚のCD-ROMに対応して、1枚のビンゴカードを所有しているのと同じである。後述するように、そのビンゴカードの内容は、懸賞サイトにアクセスして知ることができる。

【0029】当選者受付データベース33には、当選者が景品の発送先やアンケートに対する回答等を入力する画面情報が記録されている他、当該画面に当選者が入力した情報が記録される。

【0030】図6は、消費者が商品を購入してから、景品を獲得するまでの手順を示すフローチャートである。

【0031】購入した商品に添付されたCD-ROMをパソコンにセットすると、CD-ROMに記録されたトップ画面20(図7参照)が自動的にブラウザに表示される(#21→22)。CD-ROMには、懸賞サイトのURLが記録されており、図7のトップ画面20上で「Enter」部分をクリックすると、パソコンがインターネットに接続され、懸賞サイトへアクセスする(#23)。

【0032】景品抽選サーバシステム2内では、CD-ROMを読み込んだクライアント端末1からのアクセスがあると、まず、回数判定手段307が当該CD-ROM内に記録された識別コードと同一の識別コードをビンゴカードデータベース31から検索し、そこに関連付けられたゲーム回数情報およびアクセス回数情報を取得して、実行可能な残りゲーム回数をブラウザ画面上に表示する(#24)。

【0033】ここで、ゲーム回数情報とは、消費者がチャレンジできるゲーム回数を予め設定した情報である。また、アクセス回数情報とは、実際にゲームにチャレンジした回数(アクセス回数に等しい)を示す情報である。

これらの情報はいずれも、CD-ROMの識別コードと関連付けてビンゴカードデータベース31内に記録されている。なお、図6のフローチャートでは、設定されたゲーム回数が2回である場合を示している。ゲーム回数は、すべてのCD-ROMについて一律に特定の回数を定めてもよいし、各CD-ROMごとに異なる回数を設定してもよい。

【0034】次に、回数判定手段307は、取得したゲーム回数情報とアクセス回数情報とを比較し、アクセス回数がゲーム回数を超えている場合には、ゲーム実行画面30(図8参照)に移行することなく、ゲームを終了させる(#25→30)。アクセス回数がゲーム回数以下である場合には、図8のゲーム実行画面30に移行する(#25→26)。

【0035】図8において、ビンゴカード表示手段303は、ビンゴカードデータベース31内のビンゴカード情報に基づいて、CD-ROMの識別コードに対応するビンゴカード37をブラウザ画面に表示する。消費者がブラウザ画面の抽選アイコン38をクリックすると、乱数発生手段304が所定個数のナンバーを選択して、図9に示したように、結果を「当り目」としてブラウザ画面に表示する(#27→28)。なお、乱数発生手段304は、乱数発生用の関数を有するプログラム言語を利用する等、公知の方法で実現することができる。

【0036】図9のゲーム実行画面31上では、乱数発生手段304によって選択されたナンバーに対応するビンゴカード上の数字が反転表示等を利用して表示される。ビンゴカードデータベース31には、ビンゴカード上で揃った列の数と当選内容とがテーブル化して記録されており、当選判定手段305は、ブラウザ画面上でのゲーム結果とビンゴカードデータベース31内の情報とから当選内容を判定して、ブラウザ画面上に表示する。図9の例では、「やったね!!」の表示が示されている。ビンゴカードの場合、カード上で揃った列の数によって景品が異なるので、図8および図9のように、列数と景品との対応を併せてブラウザ画面上に示すことが好ましい。

【0037】ビンゴカードがアタリの場合には、ブラウザ画面の応募ボタン39をクリックすると、景品抽選サーバシステム3の当選者受付手段306は、当選者受付データベース33内に記録された不図示の景品申込画面をブラウザに表示する。当選者は、当該画面に景品発送先の住所や所定のアンケートに対する回答を入力して、景品抽選サーバシステム3に送信する(#29)。これらの情報は、当選者受付データベース33内に記録される。

【0038】ビンゴカードが外れた場合、ハズレ回数がカウントされて識別コードと関連付けてビンゴカードデータベース31内に記録される。ハズレ回数がCD-ROMに固有のゲーム回数に達すると、再度のチャレンジが不可である旨をブラウザ画面上に表示し(#31→30)、まだハズレ回数がゲーム回数に達していない場合には、再度チャンスがある旨をブラウザ画面上に表示することが

好ましい(#31→32)。

【0039】景品抽選サーバシステムの第3実施形態(図10)

図10は、第3実施形態に係る景品抽選サーバシステム4を示している。景品抽選サーバシステム4は、スクラッチカードデータベース41、プログラムデータベース42、および当選者受付データベース43を備える。サーバシステムの制御手段401はCPU等から構成されており、制御手段401がプログラムデータベース42に記録された各種プログラムを実行することで、WWWサーバ手段402、スクラッチカード表示手段403、当選判定手段404、当選者受付手段405の各機能が実現される。

【0040】第3実施形態の景品抽選サーバシステム4は、第2実施形態の景品抽選サーバシステム3のビンゴカード表示手段303および乱数発生手段304に代えて、スクラッチカード表示手段403を採用したものであり、これに伴ってデータベース内に記録された情報および当選判定手段の機能が異なるが、他の機能は第2実施形態の場合と同等である。したがって、異なる点のみを説明する。

【0041】スクラッチカードデータベース41には、CD-ROM内に記録した識別コードと同一の識別コードに関連付けて、スクラッチカード情報が記録されている。スクラッチカード情報は、現実のスクラッチカードと同様のゲームを行なうための情報で、具体的なゲーム内容は限定されないが、一例を示すと以下の通りである。

【0042】スクラッチカード情報として、複数種類のキャラクタ画像およびその配列を記録し、スクラッチカード表示手段403が、識別コードに対応するスクラッチカードをブラウザ画面上に表示する。ただし、ブラウザ画面上では各キャラクタ画像はマスクされており、消費者側からは分からない。ブラウザ画面上で、チャレンジャー(消費者)がマスクされた所定箇所を選択すると、そこにマスクされていた画像が表示される。予め決められた個数だけ同一の画像が現れるとアタリである。または、同一画像の数により、1等、2等、ハズレ等が決まる。

【0043】スクラッチカードデータベース41には、同一画像の個数と当選内容とがテーブル化して記録されており、当選判定手段404は、ブラウザ画面上でのゲーム結果とスクラッチカードデータベース41内の情報とから当選内容を判定して、ブラウザ画面上に表示する。

【0044】スクラッチカードゲームの場合、ビンゴカードゲームの場合とは異なり、同一のスクラッチカード情報であっても、チャレンジャーの選択次第で当選内容が異なる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】 本発明の景品抽選サーバシステムを利用した景品抽選の一例を示す全体図である。

【図2】 本発明の一実施形態に係る景品抽選サーバシステムを説明する説明図である。

【図3】 図2の景品抽選サーバシステムを使用する場合における、景品獲得までの流れを説明するフローチャートである。

【図4】 図3の例におけるトップ画面を示す説明図である。

【図5】 本発明の第2実施形態に係る景品抽選サーバシステムを説明する説明図である。

【図6】 図5の景品抽選サーバシステムを使用する場合における、景品獲得までの流れを説明するフローチャートである。

【図7】 図6の例におけるトップ画面を示す説明図である。

【図8】 図6の例におけるゲーム実行画面を示す説明

図である。

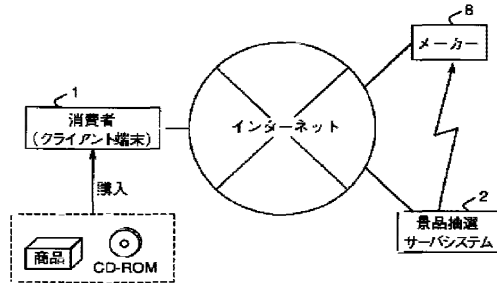
【図9】 図6の例におけるゲーム実行画面を示す説明図である。

【図10】 本発明の第3実施形態に係る景品抽選サーバシステムを説明する説明図である。

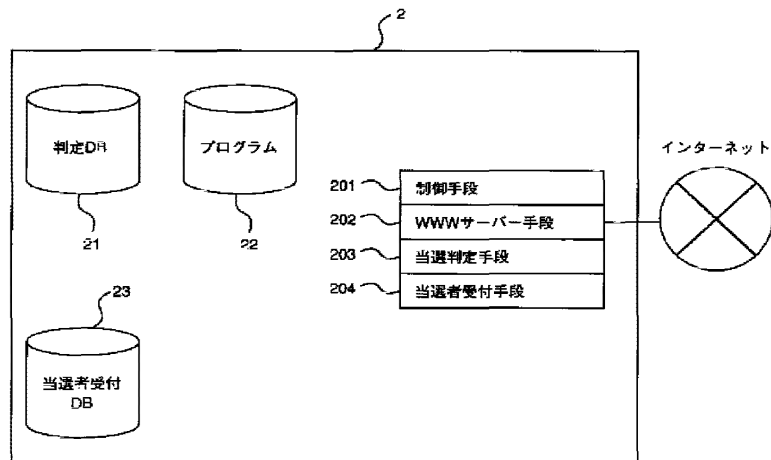
【符号の説明】

- 1 クライアント端末
- 2、3、4 景品抽選サーバシステム
- 8 商品メーカー
- 10、20 トップ画面
- 30、31 ゲーム実行画面
- 37 ビンゴカード(画像)
- 38 抽選アイコン
- 39 応募ボタン

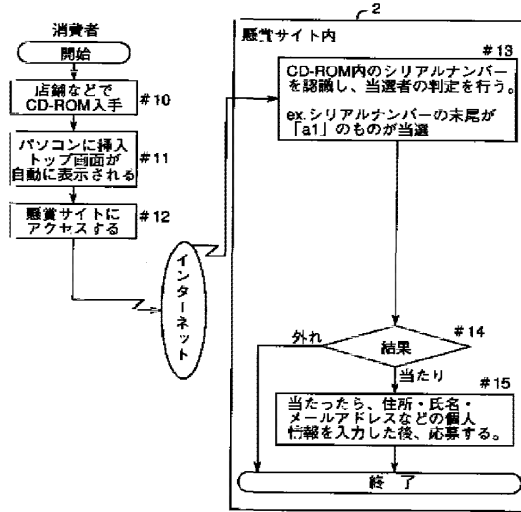
【図1】



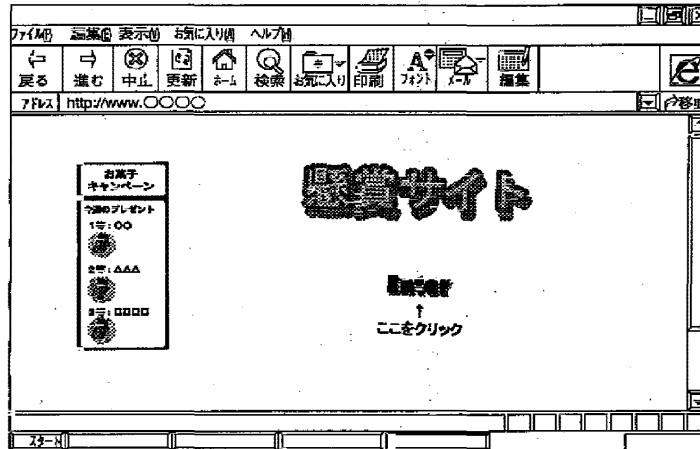
【図2】



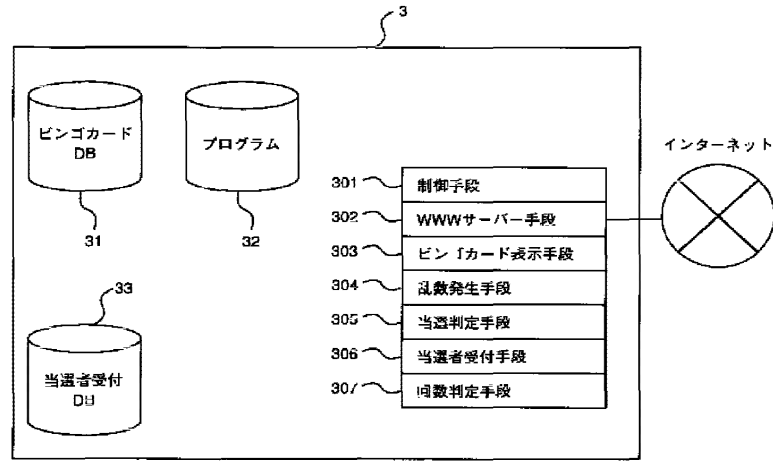
【図3】



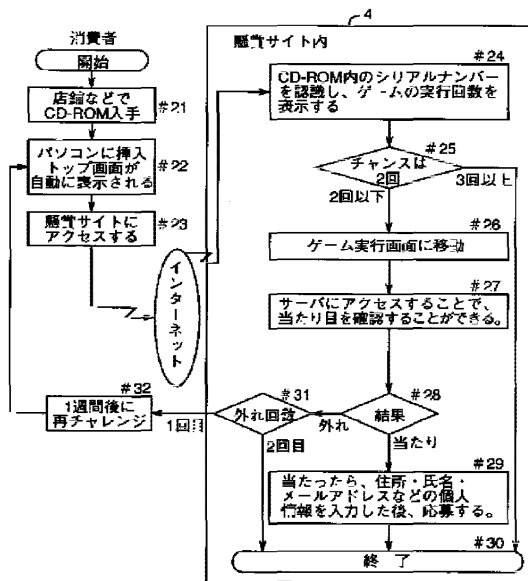
【図4】



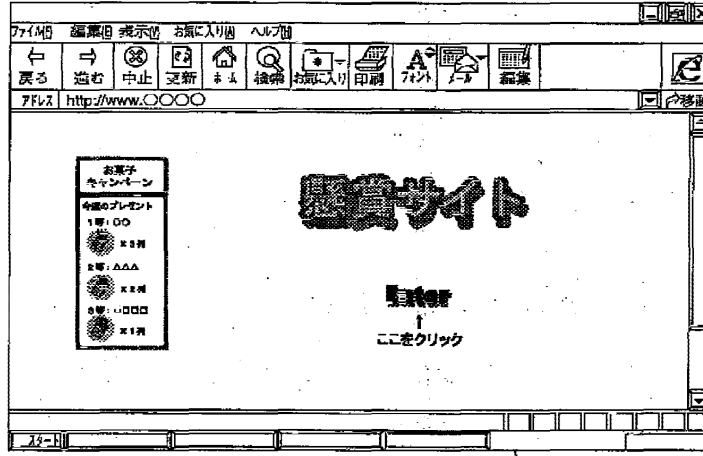
【図5】



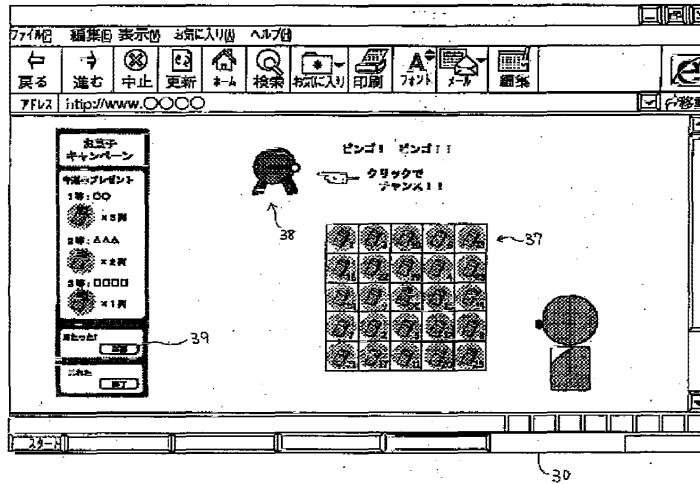
【図6】



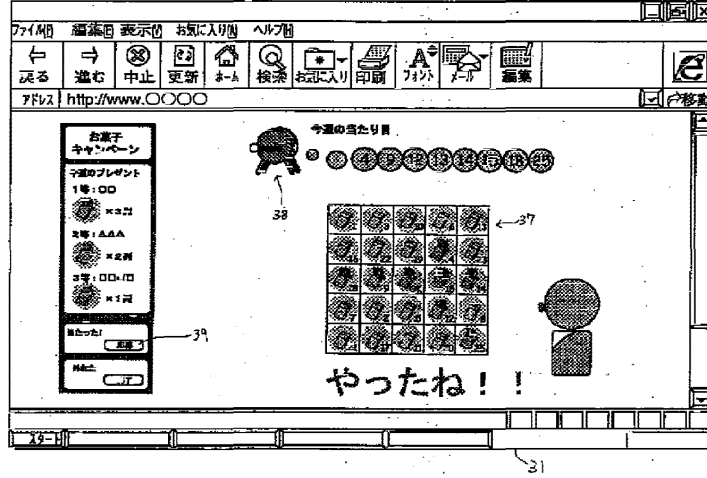
【図7】



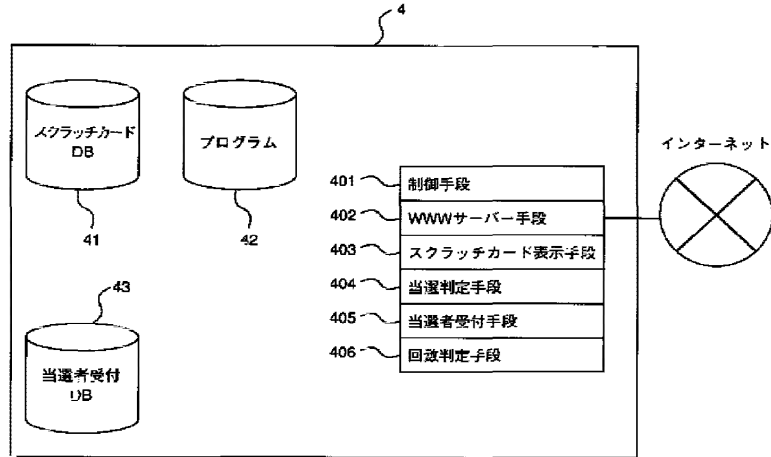
【図8】



【図9】



【図10】





Espacenet

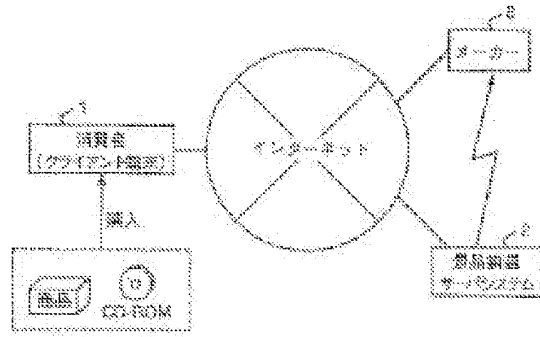
Bibliographic data: JP2002236773 (A) — 2002-08-23

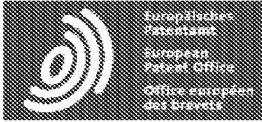
GIFT LOTTERY SERVER SYSTEM

Inventor(s): FUKUDA MASANORI ± (FUKUDA MASANORI)
Applicant(s): DAINIPPON PRINTING CO LTD ± (DAINIPPON PRINTING CO LTD)
Classification: - **international:** A63F3/06; G06Q10/00; G06Q50/00; G06Q50/10; G06Q50/34; (IPC1-7): A63F3/06; G06F17/60
- **cooperative:**
Application number: JP20010034264 20010209
Priority number (s): JP20010034264 20010209

Abstract of JP2002236773 (A)

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To enhance a sales promotion effect and to efficiently obtain consumer information by utilizing a gift lottery server system. SOLUTION: An identifying code being the same as that which is recorded in a CD-ROM distributed with a merchandise is recorded in the database of the gift lottery server system 2 in accordance with win or losing information. The system 2 judges a win or losing through the use of the identifying code in the database and the identifying code recorded in the CD-ROM when a client terminal 1 which reads the CD-ROM performs access to the system. The server system 2 displays a judgement result on a browser screen and obtains consumer information together with information concerning a gift delivery destination.





Notice

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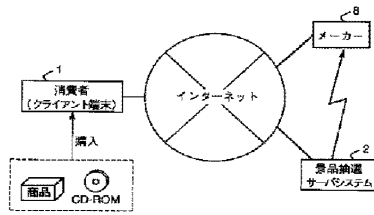
ABSTRACT JP2002236773

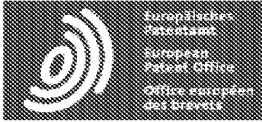
PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To enhance a sales promotion effect and to efficiently obtain consumer information by utilizing a gift lottery server system.

SOLUTION: An identifying code being the same as that which is recorded in a CD-ROM distributed with a merchandise is recorded in the database of the gift lottery server system 2 in accordance with win or losing information.

The system 2 judges a win or losing through the use of the identifying code in the database and the identifying code recorded in the CD-ROM when a client terminal 1 which reads the CD-ROM performs access to the system.

The server system 2 displays a judgement result on a browser screen and obtains consumer information together with information concerning a gift delivery destination.





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DESCRIPTION JP2002236773

[0001]

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION The present invention, the Internet, about the prize lottery server system which can be used in local area network, any other network.

[0002]

Conventionally, for sales promotion and consumer information acquisition of goods, for example, it has been made to sell the products that was attached applicants seal.

In other words, consumers who purchase items the applicant seal is attached, it be to apply by attaching together with applicants seal performs fill a predetermined questionnaire application form, can acquire the prize by lottery.

[0003]

However, in the above method, it takes several weeks to months before the found winning results from the application, not sufficient as a sales promotion effect, as a result, for the acquisition of consumer information, it is by no means satisfactory.

In the above way, reception processing of the application form, and registration to the database of consumer information that is described therein, and further it becomes a doing lottery manually, the work is complicated take considerable effort.

[0004]

In view of the invention [Problems to be Solved] above circumstances, the present invention aims at providing a prize lottery server system with the following features.

[0005]

In the present invention, means the action and effects to solve the problems], is associated with a recording medium such as a CD-ROM, the product is distributed to consumers.

In this case, for example, like a music CD, may be the product itself recording medium, is included in the concept of such a case, "is attached to the merchandise."

[0006]

Each recording medium is recorded an identification code, information about the game winning rights and what has been associated with the same identification code and which are recorded in a database in the lottery prize server system.

Consumers who have purchased the product, and made to read a recording medium that has been attached to a client terminal such as a personal computer or point-of-sale terminal to its own, accessing a prize site that is set in the prize lottery server system.

[0007]

In the present invention, the identification code, and may be any any information that can be associated with the information and each of the recording medium in the database.

[0008]

Consumers, in prize site, check the Atari loss of self-recording medium, or by performing a predetermined game, check the contents of winning as a result.

Thus, using the prize lottery server system, consumers can know quickly drawing result of a prize, can be expected to increase the sales promotion effect.

In addition, application form acceptance process and lottery in goods manufacturers is also unnecessary.

[0009]

As a method for winner receives a prize, also conceivable that the winner to contact the shipping destination such as prize by mail or FAX, it displays a screen for premium application to the client terminal, and transmits the information from there preferred.

In the screen for prize application, it is preferable to provide a predetermined questionnaire, so that recording the questionnaire result by winner database in prize lottery server system, product manufacturers, be acquired consumer information I can.

[0010]

As the prize is not limited to "product" requires a mail or the like, the music data or the like may be those such as distributed via a network.

In this case, it is transmitted from the client terminal address information prize lottery server system.

[0011]

PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION Embodiments of the present invention with reference to the accompanying drawings will be described in detail below.

In the following embodiments, it is adopted the CD-ROM as a recording medium, in the present invention, it is possible to use a suitable recording medium is not limited to the CD-ROM.

[0012]

Overall view Figure 1 system shows the entire product sales using the prize lottery server system of the present invention by way of example.

The products that the consumer has purchased at the store, etc., CD-ROM is attached.

In addition, the goods themselves are CD-ROM (for example, music CD) may be.

Consumers, PCs self owned, the installed terminal to the shop, by setting the other of the CD-ROM the client terminal 1 accesses the sweepstakes prize lottery site server system 2.

Also, by using a small media other than CD-ROM, it is possible to access the prize site from a mobile phone or the like.

[0013]

In addition, Yes to record the URL of the prize lottery server system to the recording medium, when it is fitted with a recording medium Kurainto terminal, URL is automatically loaded, access to the prize lottery server system is performed.

[0014]

The CD-ROM "Atari" and "loss" is set.

Or, CD-ROM type game rights have been granted to the consumer, and performs game prize site, can acquire the prize in the results depending.

[0015]

If CD-ROM was Atari, or games of a result, when it became a winning, application screen (not shown) for the winner in the browser screen client terminal 1 is displayed, winner, in this In answer to a given questionnaire, including the shipping destination such as prizes, is transmitted to the prize lottery server system 2, this information is recorded in the database in the server system 2.

[0016]

After a few days, is shipping prize to winner, to goods maker 8, consumer information based on the above survey results are provided.

Note that prizes may be a product that is delivered to the winner by mail or the like, may be music data to be distributed via the Internet.

Maker 8, via the Internet, or mail, FAX, other means, can be obtained consumer information.

[0017]

Although the figure shows an example of using the Internet is not limited to the Internet, commonly referred to, in various sulfonate work such as a local area network in the i-mode (TM) or a predetermined area, the prize lottery server system 2 can be used.

[0018]

First embodiment of the prize lottery server system (Figures 2-4) Figure 2 illustrates a prize lottery server system 2.

Prize lottery server system 2 includes a judgment database 21, the program database 22 and the winner accepts database 23,.

Control means 201 of the server system is composed of a CPU or the like, by executing various programs the control means 201 is stored in the program database 22, WWW server means 202, the winning determination unit 203, the winner receiving unit 204 each function is realized.

[0019]

In this embodiment, "Atari" or "loss" has been set in the CD-ROM itself, the same identification code and the identification code was recorded to within distributed CD-ROM that attached to the products, Atari loss in association with the information, and is recorded in the judgment database 21.

It is to be noted that the "identification code", and Atari losing information in the decision database 21, and may be a some sort of information, such as those associated with the individual on the CD-ROM.

[0020]

The winner accepts database 23, in addition to screen information winner to enter the answer, etc. for the shipping destination and questionnaires of prizes have been recorded, the information winner is entered on the screen is recorded.

[0021]

Or CD-ROM is either a "hit", "loss", for example, the color and the CD-ROM itself, it may be displayed in print or the like which was applied to the CD-ROM, and recorded in the CD-ROM and may be displayed by the data.

In the former case, the consumer can know the Atari loss at the time of breaking the bag for packaging CD-ROM.

In the latter case, the consumer can know the Atari loss at the time of accessing the computer on the screen or prize lottery server system 2 in sweepstakes site, after setting the CD-ROM to the computer.

[0022]

3, from the consumer to purchase products, is a flow chart showing the procedure up to win a prize.

[0023]

When you set the purchased goods to the attached CD-ROM into your computer, CD-ROM top has been recorded on the screen 10 (see FIG. 4) is automatically displayed in the browser (# 10 → 11).

Sweepstakes in the CD-ROM, URL of the sweepstakes site is recorded, clicking the "Enter" portion on the top screen 10 of FIG. 4, the PC is connected to the Internet, it is set to prize lottery server system within 2 access to the site (# 12).

[0024]

The prize lottery within the server system 2, when there is access from the read client terminal 1 a CD-ROM, the same identification code and the recorded identification code win determination unit 203 in the CD-ROM from the determination database 21 Locate, and then get the Atari loss information associated with it, it is determined Atari loss (# 13 → 14).

The win determination unit 203 displays a screen or loss Atari screen (both not shown) corresponding thereto on the browser screen of the client terminal 1.

In the Atari screen, optionally, 1 etc., 2, etc., it is preferable to also display information such as 3 or the like.

[0025]

Through Atari screen, if there is a request for applicants from winner, winner receiving means 204 of the prize lottery server system 2 displays the premium application screen (not shown) to the browser.

Winner, the prize shipping address on the screen address (or, delivery destination address) Enter the answer to or a predetermined questionnaire, to be sent to the prize lottery server system 2 (# 15).

These pieces of information are recorded in the winner accepts database within 23.

[0026]

Second embodiment of a prize lottery server system (Figs. 5 9) Figure 5 shows the prize lottery server system 3 according to the second embodiment.

Prize lottery server system 3 includes bingo card database 31, the program database 32, and the winner accepts database 33.

Control means 301 of the server system is composed of a CPU or the like, by executing various programs the control means 301 is stored in the program database 32, WWW server means 302, the bingo card display unit 303, the random number generator 304, winning decision means 305, winner receiving means 306, each function of the number of times determining means 307

is realized.

[0027]

In this embodiment, the same identification code and the identification code which is recorded in the CD-ROM is, in association with the bingo card information, and is recorded in the database 31 bingo cards.

It is to be noted that the "identification code", and bingo card information in the bingo card database 31, and may be a some sort of information, such as those associated with the individual on the CD-ROM.

[0028]

The bingo card information, such as real bingo card, and is information that records the number of the predetermined number which are arranged in a matrix.

Hand of number and sequence, and the like of each consumer, has become unique by the identification code of the CD-ROM.

In other words, the consumer, in response to a single CD-ROM which has been attached to the product, is the same as owns one bingo card.

As described below, the contents of the bingo card can be known by accessing the sweepstakes site.

[0029]

The winner accepts database 33, in addition to screen information winner to enter the answer, etc. to the shipping address and questionnaires of prizes have been recorded, the information winner is entered on the screen is recorded.

[0030]

6, from the consumer to purchase the product, is a flow chart showing the procedure up to win a prize.

[0031]

When you set the purchased goods to the attached CD-ROM into your computer, CD-ROM top screen has been recorded in 20 (see FIG. 7) is automatically displayed in the browser (# 21 → 22).

The CD-ROM, URL of the sweepstakes sites is recorded, clicking the "Enter" portion on the top screen 20 in Figure 7, the personal computer is connected to the Internet, access to the prize site (# 23).

[0032]

The prize lottery server system within 2, when there is access from the client terminal 1 read a CD-ROM, first, bingo cards the same identification code and the identification code number determining unit 307 is recorded in the CD-ROM is retrieved from the database 31, there is acquired the number of games and information access count information associated, and displays the remaining number of games that can be executed on the browser screen (# 24).

[0033]

Here, the number of games information is preset information a number of games that consumers can challenge.

The access count information, it is information indicating the actual number of challenged in the game (equal to the number of accesses).

All of these information are recorded in the bingo card database 31 in association with the identification code of the CD-ROM.

In the flowchart of FIG. 6 shows the number of games if the set is two times.

Game number, it may be determined a certain number of uniformly for all CD-ROM, may be set to different times for each CD-ROM.

[0034]

Then, the number determining means 307, and compares the acquired number of games information and the access count information, if the number of accesses exceeds the number of games, without migrating to the game execution screen 30 (see FIG. 8) and ends the game (# 25 → 30).

If the number of accesses is equal to or less than the number of games, the process proceeds to the game execution screen 30 in FIG. 8 (# 25 → 26).

[0035]

In Figure 8, the bingo card display unit 303, based on the bingo card information in the bingo card database 31, and displays a bingo card 37 corresponding to the identification code of the CD-ROM into the browser screen.

When the consumer clicks on the draw icon 38 on the browser screen, the random number generation unit 304 selects the number of predetermined number, as shown in Figure 9, is displayed on the browser screen on the result as "per second" (# 27 → 28).

Incidentally, the random number generator 304, etc. to utilize programming language with a function for random number generation, may be implemented in a known manner.

[0036]

On the game execution screen 31 of FIG. 9, the numbers on the bingo card that corresponds to the number selected by the random number generating means 304 is displayed by using a highlighted like.

The bingo card database 31, Bingo is the number of uniform column on the card and the winning content is recorded in a table, winning decision means 305, information of the game results and the bingo card database 31 on the browser screen by determining the winning content and a is displayed on the browser screen.

In the example of Figure 9, and "I did!

Display of is shown. "

For bingo card, the prize is different depending on the number of columns aligned on the card, as shown in Figure 8 and 9, it is preferable that shown on the browser screen together the correspondence between the number of columns and the prizes.

[0037]

If bingo card of Atari, If you click on the application button 39 on the browser screen, winner receiving means 306 of prize lottery server system 3, a premium application screen (not shown) that has been recorded in the winner accepts database within 33 I want to display in the browser.

Winner, enter the answer to the address or a predetermined questionnaire of premium shipping destination to the screen, to be sent to the prize lottery server system 3 (# 29).

These pieces of information are recorded in the winner accepts database within 33.

[0038]

If the bingo card is out, losing the number is recorded in association with the count has been identified within the coding bingo card database 31.

When losing count reaches the specific number of games in the CD-ROM, and displays the effect is impossible challenge again on the browser screen (# 31 → 30), yet when the losing count has not reached the number of games the , it is preferable to display that there is a chance again on the browser screen (# 31 → 32).

[0039]

Third embodiment of the prize lottery server system (Figure 10) Figure 10 shows a lottery prize server system 4 according to the third embodiment.

Prize lottery server system 4 includes scratch card database 41, the program database 42, and the winner accepts database 43.

Control means 401 of the server system is composed of a CPU, the control unit 401 by executing various programs stored in the program database 42, WWW server means 402, a scratch card display unit 403, the winning determination device 404, each function of the winner receiving unit 405 is realized.

[0040]

Prize lottery server system 4 of the third embodiment, instead of the bingo card display means 303 and the random number generating means 304 of the prize lottery server system 3 of the second embodiment, is obtained by adopting the scratch card display means 403, this but together becomes the function of the information and the win determination unit is recorded in the database is different, the other functions are the same as in the second embodiment.

Therefore, I will explain the only different points.

[0041]

In the scratch card database 41, in association with the same identification code and the identification code which is recorded in the CD-ROM, a scratch card information is recorded.

Scratch card information is information for performing the same game and the real scratch card, specific game content but are not limited to, are as follows to show an example.

[0042]

As scratch card information, records a plurality of types of character images and sequences thereof, scratch card display unit 403 displays a scratch card corresponding to the identification code on the browser screen.

However, each character image on the browser screen is masked, you do not know from the consumer side.

In the browser screen, Challenger (consumer) is Selecting a predetermined portion which is masked, which image has been masked is displayed.

It is Atari and advance only predetermined number of the same image appears.

Or, depending on the number of the same image, 1, etc., 2, etc., come off and is determined.

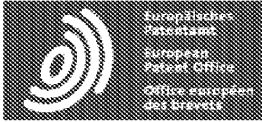
[0043]

In the scratch card database 41 includes a number of the same images winning content and is recorded by a table, winning decision means 404, the winning content and a game result and

information scratch card database 41 on the browser screen it is determined, is displayed on the browser screen.

[0044]

For scratch card game, unlike the case of the bingo card game, even the same scratch card information, winning content varies depending on selection of the challenger.



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CLAIMS JP2002236773

[0001]

The same identification code and the identification code recorded on the recording medium to be distributed in association with the item, a determination database storing in association with Atari or loss of information (21), from the client terminal to read the recording medium When there is access, the identification code in the determination database, the identification code recorded on the recording medium, and to determine the Atari or off the, winning decision means for displaying the result on the browser screen of the client terminal (and 203), and characterized by comprising a, prize lottery server system.

[0002]

The same identification code and the identification code recorded on the recording medium to be distributed in association with the product, as well as stored in correspondence with a predetermined bingo card information, and associates the winning content and number of columns aligned on bingo card a bingo card database that stores Te (31), when there is access from the client terminal to read the recording medium, bingo card display for displaying a bingo card corresponding to the identification code in the bingo card database on the browser screen means a (303) receives a request from the browser screen, a random number generating means for displaying on the browser screen by using a random number to select the number of predetermined number (304), it is selected by the random number generator and a number and bingo card information, search for the corresponding winning content from bingo card database, a win determination means (305) for displaying the result on the browser screen, and characterized by comprising a, prize lottery server system.

[0003]

The bingo card database, stores the number of games in association with the identification code, and the number of games, comparing, and number of accesses from the client terminal only if the access number is less than or equal to the number of games, the bingo card is characterized by further comprising a number determination means (307) for allowing the bingo card displayed by the display unit according to claim 2, wherein the prize lottery server system.

[0004]

The same identification code and the identification code recorded on the recording medium to be distributed in association with the product, as well as stored in correspondence to a predetermined scratch card information, in association with the selection result and the winning content on scratch cards and the stored scratch card database (41), when there is access from the client terminal to read the recording medium, a scratch card display means for displaying a scratch card corresponding to the identification code in the scratch card database on the browser screen and (403), in response to the user a predetermined point on the scratch cards displayed on the browser screen is selected, find the winning content corresponding to the selected results from the scratch card database, the result on the browser screen and characterized by comprising a win determination means for displaying (404), and the prize lottery server system.

[0005]

The scratch database stores the number of games in association with the identification code, and the number of games, comparing, and number of accesses from the client terminal only if the access number is less than or equal to the number of games, the scratch and characterized by further comprising a number determination means (406) for permitting scratch cards displayed by card display means, the prize of claim 4, wherein the lottery server system.

[0006]

The above recording medium are recorded the URL of the prize lottery server system, and

wherein the Kurainto terminal mounted recording medium, accesses the automatic prize lottery server system reads the URL in the recording medium and, the prize lottery server system according to any one of claims 1 to 5.

[0007]

And storing the screen for prize applicant by winners winner receipt database (23, 33), when the winning is determined by the win determination unit receives a request from the browser screen, and prizes on the browser screen is characterized in that it further comprising a winner receiving means (204,306,405) for displaying the application screen, and the prize lottery server system according to any one of claims 1 to 6.

[0008]

To the prize application screen, characterized in that the questionnaire item for consumer information acquisition is set, 7. The prize lottery server system according.

[0009]

Characterized in that the recording medium is a CD-ROM, and the prize lottery server system according to any one of claims 1 to 8.

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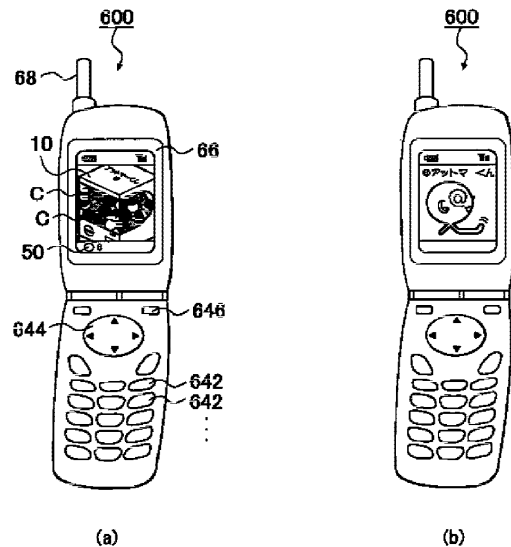
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(54) 【発明の名称】 情報提供方法、情報処理システム、情報取得プログラム、及び情報記憶媒体

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 本発明の課題は、娯楽性を備えた新しい情報提供方法を提案することである。

【解決手段】 提供する情報を割り当てたカプセルCを販売する仮想販売機10をユーザー・インターフェースとして設定する。カプセルCには、異なる複数の種類の情報が所与の割合で割り当てられ、販売機内に無作為な順番で配置されて、順に販売される。従って、購入のタイミングによってユーザーが得られる情報の内容が異なり、「当り／ハズレ」が存在する。一方、ユーザーは、カプセルCの配置の様子を観察し、ほしい情報が販売されるタイミングを予測することで、入手する確率を高くすることができる。ユーザーは、巧くタイミングを予測していかにか少ない回数でほしい情報を手に入れるか、というゲーム感覚に類する楽しさを得ることができる。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】情報処理システムが、通信ネットワークを介して接続されるユーザー端末に、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する情報提供方法であって、前記提供順番を設定する順番設定ステップと、前記各種の情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を示唆する示唆情報をユーザー端末に送信する示唆ステップと、

ユーザー端末から送信される提供要求を受信する要求受信ステップと、

所与の代価と引き換えに、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、前記提供順番に従った情報を送信する情報提供ステップと、を含むことを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項2】請求項1において、前記示唆情報には、前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物と、前記代替物を配置し、且つ、代替物の提供順番の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、を備えた仮想器物の画像情報が含まれることを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項3】請求項1において、前記示唆情報には、所与の視点から見た画像情報が含まれること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項4】請求項3において、前記示唆ステップには、視点を変更するステップが含まれ、前記示唆情報には、少なくとも、前記変更した視点に基づく画像情報が含まれること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項5】請求項1～4の何れかにおいて、前記示唆情報には、段階的に提供順番の詳細を表す当該段階ごとの画像情報が含まれること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項6】請求項1～5の何れかにおいて、前記示唆情報には、順番待ち状態の情報が、情報の種別に応じて異なる表示形態で表示された画像情報が含まれること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項7】請求項1～6の何れかにおいて、前記情報提供ステップは、更に、情報が提供されることを表現する画像、効果音、及びユーザー端末が体感機能を備える場合に当該機能を制御する情報の内、少なくとも一つを送信するステップであること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項8】請求項1～7の何れかにおいて、前記示唆ステップには、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を変更する変更ステップが含まれること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項9】請求項8において、前記変更ステップは、前記情報提供ステップによる情報の提供毎に、前記提供順番に基づいて、順番待ち状態の

情報の提供順番を変更するステップであること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項10】請求項8または9において、前記変更ステップは、ユーザー端末から変更要求を受信した場合に、前記提供順番の全部または一部の順番を変更するステップであること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項11】請求項1～10の何れかにおいて、前記代価として所与の遊戯媒体を用いること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項12】請求項11において、ユーザー端末からユーザー登録情報を受信する登録情報受信ステップと、前記受信したユーザー登録情報にしたがってユーザー或いはユーザー端末を、登録ユーザー或いは登録ユーザー端末として登録・管理する登録ステップと、登録ユーザー或いは登録ユーザー端末に対して、所与の時間間隔毎に所与量の遊戯媒体を累積的に割り当てる割当ステップと、を含むことを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項13】請求項12において、前記割当ステップには、前記所与量の遊戯媒体を割り当てた場合に上限を超えるか否かを判定するステップが含まれ、上限を超えないと判定された場合に前記所与量の遊戯媒体を割り当てるステップであること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項14】請求項1～13の何れかにおいて、ユーザー端末から送信される通告条件を受信するステップと、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番が前記通告条件を満足するか否かを判定するステップと、前記判定により前記通告条件を満足すると判定した場合に、当該通告条件を送信したユーザー端末にその旨の情報を送信するステップと、を含むことを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項15】請求項1～14の何れかにおいて、前記要求受信ステップにより受信した提供要求を送信したユーザー端末と、所与の期間内に提供要求を受信した回数とを対応付けて記憶するステップと、前記受信した回数に基づいて、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、順番待ち状態の情報を送信するかどうかを判定するステップと、を含み、前記情報提供ステップは、前記判定により送信すると判定された場合に、順番待ち状態の情報を送信するステップであること、を特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項16】請求項1～15の何れかにおいて、ユーザー端末の位置情報を取得するステップ、または、情報処理システムの位置情報を取得するステップの少なくとも何れか一方を含み、且つ、前記情報提供ステップが、該位置情報に応じて、提供する情報の内容を変化させる位置対応ステップと、を含む

ことを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項17】請求項1～16の何れかにおいて、ユーザー端末からユーザー登録情報を受信するステップと、前記受信したユーザー登録情報に従って所定の物品またはサービスを提供するステップと、を含むことを特徴とする情報提供方法。

【請求項18】通信ネットワークを介して接続されるユーザー端末に、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する情報処理システムであって、前記提供順番を設定する順番設定手段と、前記各種の情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を示唆する示唆情報をユーザー端末に送信する示唆手段と、ユーザー端末から送信される提供要求を受信する要求受信手段と、所与の代価と引き換えに、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、前記提供順番に従って情報を送信する情報提供手段と、を備えるとともに、前記示唆情報には、前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物と、前記代替物を配置し、且つ、代替物の提供順番の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、配置順番に従って代替物を排出する代替物排出部と、代替物の排出口と、代替物の排出を実行させる操作部と、を備えた仮想器物の、所与の視点から見た画像情報が含まれること、を特徴とする情報処理システム。

【請求項19】プロセッサによる演算・制御によって、情報端末装置に対して情報処理システムとの通信を行う機能を実現させるための情報取得プログラムであって、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する、前記各種の情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部の示唆情報を受信する示唆情報取得手段と、情報処理システムに情報の提供要求を送信する要求送信手段と、提供される情報を受信する情報取得手段と、を前記情報端末装置に機能させるための情報を含むとともに、

前記示唆情報取得手段が、前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物をその内部に配置し、該代替物の配置状況の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、提供順番に従って代替物を排出する代替物排出部と、代替物の排出口と、代替物の排出を実行させる操作部と、を備えた仮想器物の、所与の視点から見た画像を表示し、且つ、示唆情報に基づいて代替物を前記仮想器物内に配置するための情報を含むこと、を特徴とする情報取得プログラム。

【請求項20】請求項19記載の情報取得プログラムを記憶する情報記憶媒体。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、情報処理システムが、通信ネットワークを介してユーザー端末との間でデータの送受信を行い、種々の情報を提供する情報提供方法等に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】近年、プログラムや画像、音楽などの種々の情報取引において、CD-ROMやFDなどの情報記憶媒体の物流を必要としない、通信ネットワークを介した取引が盛んに行われている。その方法としては、例えば、実際の店舗施設の代わりに情報処理システムが公開するWebページ上に、商品の情報（例えば、名称、機能説明、商品イメージの画像、金額など）と購入要求ボタンを表示した仮想販売場を設定し、ユーザーから希望する商品の購入要求を受けると、例えば、公知の課金システムを利用して、代金の支払いと引き換えに商品である情報をユーザー端末にダウンロードさせて情報を提供する方法がある。

【0003】また、中には、ユーザー端末にユーザー・インターフェースとして仮想の自動販売機を画面表示させ、ユーザーからの購入要求を受けると、サーバー側で商品をランダムに選択してユーザーに提供する方法もある。この場合、当然のことながらユーザーはどのような情報が提供されるか分からないので、おみくじやビンゴなどに見られる娯楽性や運試的楽しみを付加する効果がある。こうした、通信ネットワークを介した情報提供方法は、実際の物品の物流による情報提供方法に比べ、商品授受に要する時間が短く、また、従業員や店舗施設を必要としないメリットから、ネットワーク化の拡大とともに利用が広がっている。

【0004】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、上述のような従来の情報提供方法は、前者の例のように、購入の要求に対して、ほしい情報が必ず提供される自動販売機方式か、後者の例のように、何が出てくるか分からないおみくじ販売機方式のどちらか一方に偏る場合が多く、両者の中間的な存在にあって、情報の入手そのものに娯楽性を持たせた情報提供方法は少ない。

【0005】そこで、本発明の課題は、必ずしもほしい情報が手に入るとは限らず、しかしその一方でユーザーの努力と読みによって、ある程度望む情報を入手可能となる、娯楽性を備えた情報提供方法を提案し、情報提供方法にバリエーションをもたせてユーザーに情報の入手作業そのものを楽しんでもらうことである。

【0006】

【課題を解決するための手段】以上の課題を解決するために、請求項1記載の発明は、情報処理システムが、通信ネットワークを介して接続されるユーザー端末に、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する情報提供方法であって、前記提供順番を設定する順番設定ステップ（例えば、図14のステップS900）と、前記各種の

情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を示唆する示唆情報（例えば、図17～図19）をユーザー端末に送信する示唆ステップ（例えば、図13のステップS406～S417）と、ユーザー端末から送信される提供要求を受信する要求受信ステップ（図13のステップS418～S426）と、所与の代価と引き換えに、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、前記提供順番に従った情報を送信する情報提供ステップ（図13のステップS427～434）と、を含むことを特徴とする。

【0007】請求項1記載の発明によれば、情報処理システムは、例えば、Webサイトを公開するサーバーや所与の課金システムを司るサーバー等を含むシステムであって、インターネットやケーブルTVなどの通信ネットワークを介して、PDAや携帯電話機、或いはパソコンなどのユーザー端末との間で、データの送受信を行う。この際、ユーザーが情報提供サービスの代価として課金システムを利用して所定の料金を支払うと、情報処理システムから一つ情報提供を受けることができる取り決めとなっている。以下、便宜的に購入と表現する。

【0008】また、本発明では特に、順番設定ステップを備え、商品である種々の情報が所与の順番で提供されることで、公知の自動販売機のように決まった購入ボタンを選択すると必ず決まった商品が提供されるとは限らず、購入のタイミングによってユーザーが得られる情報の内容が異なる可能性が有る点の特徴とする。即ち、ユーザーにとってみれば、提供される情報に「当り／ハズレ」があることになる。

【0009】しかしその一方で、ユーザーは、示唆ステップによって、提供順番をある程度予測できるだけの示唆情報（例えば、商品のシルエットが順番に表示されている画面、情報内容を記載したテキストが提供順番に従って並んでいる、など）を得られる。どうしても手に入れない情報がある場合は、他のユーザーが情報を購入することによって時間とともに変化する示唆情報をこまめに確認し、ユーザー自らが適切な購入タイミングを予測することで、入手する確率を高くすることができる。

【0010】したがって、本発明による情報提供方法によれば、ユーザーは、例えば「ほしい商品が並んでいる」「このままでは、いつ他の誰かに購入されてしまうかもしれない」「しかし、ほしい商品が出るまで連続して購入することなく、少ない支払いで手に入れたい」というような、射幸心と、わずかな競争心、そして経済観念による心理的な揺らぎを経験することになる。これらは、従来の自動販売機やおみくじ販売機とは異なるゲーム感覚に類する楽しさであって、本発明による情報提供方法によれば、ユーザーに購入動作そのものの楽しさを提供することができる。

【0011】また、請求項2記載の発明のように、請求項1記載の情報提供方法において、前記示唆情報には、

前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物（例えば、図9のカプセルC）と、前記代替物を配置し、且つ、代替物の提供順番の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、を備えた仮想器物（例えば、図10の仮想販売機10）の画像情報が含まれるとしても良い。

【0012】または、請求項18記載の発明のように、通信ネットワークを介して接続されるユーザー端末に、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する情報処理システムであって、前記提供順番を設定する順番設定手段（例えば、図3のWebサーバー部222、販売機管理部224）と、前記各種の情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を示唆する示唆情報をユーザー端末に送信する示唆手段（例えば、図3のWebサーバー部222、画像生成部229）と、ユーザー端末から送信される提供要求を受信する要求受信手段（例えば、図3のWebサーバー部222）と、所与の代価と引き換えに、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、前記提供順番に従って情報を送信する情報提供手段（例えば、図3のWebサーバー部222、販売機管理部224、コンテンツDB290、課金サーバー800）と、を備えるとともに、前記示唆情報には、前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物と、前記代替物を配置し、且つ、代替物の提供順番の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、配置順番に従って代替物を排出する代替物排出部（例えば、図10のオブジェクト排出部12）と、代替物の排出口（例えば、図10の14）と、代替物の排出を実行させる操作部（例えば、図10の購入レバー13）と、を備えた仮想器物の、所与の視点から見た画像情報が含まれること、を特徴としてもよい。

【0013】または、請求項19記載の発明のように、プロセッサによる演算・制御によって、情報端末装置に、対して情報処理システムとの通信を行う機能を実現させるための情報取得プログラムであって、各種情報を所与の提供順番に従って提供する、前記各種の情報の内、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部の示唆情報を受信する示唆情報取得手段（例えば、図3のブラウザ部620）と、情報処理システムに情報の提供要求を送信する要求送信手段（例えば、図3のブラウザ部620）と、提供される情報を受信する情報取得手段（例えば、図3のブラウザ部620）と、を前記情報端末装置に機能させるための情報を含むとともに、前記示唆情報取得手段が、前記順番待ち状態の情報それぞれに対応する代替物をその内部に配置し、該代替物の配置状況の全部又は一部を観察可能な代替物配置部と、提供順番に従って代替物を排出する代替物排出部と、代替物の排出口と、代替物の排出を実行させる操作部と、を備えた仮想器物の、所与の視点から見た画像を表示し、且つ、示唆情報に基づいて代替物を前記仮想器物内に配置するための情報を含むこと、を特徴としても良い。

【0014】請求項2、18、19に記載の発明によれば、請求項1と同様の効果を奏するとともに、Webページ上に、商品情報と選択ボタンを配置するだけでなく、例えば、提供される情報に相当する代替物や、代替物を取める部位、或いは商品の排出口（取出し口）などの具体的な販売機の形状を備えたユーザー・インターフェースを表示することで、より購入の実在感を付加することができる。

【0015】具体的には、例えば、仮想器物として、情報を封入した設定の代替物（例えば、カプセルやキャラクタなど）を排出する仮想販売機を表示する。その外観は、実在する販売機を模しても良いし、仮想のデザインであっても良い。そして、仮想販売機の一部が、中に配置された代替物の様子を観察できるように、例えば、一部にのぞき窓がついている、レーダー機能で中をシンボル化して見ることができ、或いは代替物が透明なケースに入れられているといった具合に設定する。

【0016】そして、情報処理システムが、示唆情報として仮想販売機内の画像を提供するならば、ユーザーは、あたかも仮想販売機の中をのぞきこんでいるかのような状態で、ほしい代替物（情報）がどの辺りに配置されているかを観察し、いつ頃購入すればほしい代替物（情報）が手に入るかの予測を立てることができる。なお、仮想器物内の代替物は単に一列に配置されるに限らず、所与のケース部分に立体的に積み重なっている設定としても良く、その場合、予測の難易度が上がり、攻略のし甲斐の有る仮想販売機を提供することができる。

【0017】また、請求項3記載の発明のように、請求項1記載の情報提供方法において、前記示唆情報には、所与の視点から見た画像情報が含まれるとしても良い。またこの場合、請求項4記載の発明のように、請求項3記載の情報提供方法において、前記示唆ステップには、視点を変更するステップが含まれ、前記示唆情報には、少なくとも、前記変更した視点に基づく画像情報が含まれること、としてもよい。

【0018】請求項3、4記載の発明によれば、請求項1と同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザーはさまざまな角度から、順番待ち状態の情報の配置状況を観察することができる。したがって、次に出てくる情報を予想し、望むものを入手するベストな購入タイミングを計る、いわゆる攻略をする過程の楽しみを、更に増すことができる。

【0019】請求項5記載の発明のように、請求項1～4の何れかに記載の情報提供方法であって、前記示唆情報には、段階的に提供順番の詳細を表す当該段階ごとの画像情報が含まれるとしても良い。

【0020】請求項5記載の発明によれば、請求項1～4の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、示唆情報となる画像を表示させる場合、順番待ち状態の情報や、該情報に相当するカプセル等の代替物の表示方法や表示数

が、仮想販売機から視点までの距離や、ユーザー端末の表示能力（例えば、表示画面の大きさ、表示色数、表示処理能力など）に応じて適宜変更される。

【0021】具体的には、例えば、仮想販売機に100個の代替物が配置されている場合、ユーザー端末の表示画面が小さいにもかかわらず、仮想販売機全体を表示し、更に個々の代替物をすべて表示すると、代替物部分の色やグラフィックスが混濁して見栄えが悪くなる。そこで、表示方法に段階を備え、全体表示では10個あたり1個の表現をし、拡大表示では1個は1個として表示することで、視点の位置や、端末側の処理能力にかかわらず、グラフィックスの見栄えを損なうことなく、広く本発明の情報提供方法本来の楽しさを提供することができる。

【0022】また、例えば、代替物を利用した情報提供方法の演出として、意図的に複数の代替物をさらにいくつかのグループにして一つのオブジェクトに封入して表示することも可能である。例えば、キャラクタを使った待ち受け画面を提供する場合に、通常1つのオブジェクトに1つのカラー画像が封入されることを、グレースケールの画像ではあるが種類が豊富なグループを設定するならば、スーパーのお買い得パックのような喜びを提供できる。或いは、「舌きりすずめ」の大きなツツラ小さなツツラのように、示唆情報から推測される封入されているデータ数とまるで反対の設定をすることで、ブラックユーモア的な効果を付加することもできる。

【0023】また、請求項6記載の発明のように、請求項1～5の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、前記示唆情報には、順番待ち状態の情報が、情報の種別に応じて異なる表示形態で表示された画像情報が含まれるとしても良い。

【0024】請求項6記載の発明によれば、請求項1～5の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、順番待ち状態の情報や、該情報に相当する代替物は、示唆情報の画面では、情報の種類（例えば、画像、音声、音楽、テキスト、プログラムなど）、情報の内容に応じて、形状や表示色などの異なる種々の特性を有して表示され、ユーザーの識別を助ける。具体的には、代替物をカプセル状のオブジェクトとするならば、例えば、半透明なオブジェクトの中に、データの内容を連想させる小画像すなわちアイコンが封入されている表示をする、或いはアイコンをオブジェクトの表面に表示することで、見れば中身がわかる状態を作ることができる。さらには、代替物に対して、情報の入手しやすさに応じて、色分け、シンボルマークの付与、或いは時間的に輝度・明度変化させるなどの特性を設定し、コレクション性を前面に出すこともできる。なお、代替物の特徴は、表面の特徴に限らず、その形状や画面内の挙動（例えば、振動・回転など）であってもかまわない。

【0025】また、請求項7記載の発明のように、請求

項1～6の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、前記情報提供ステップは、更に、情報が提供されることを表現する画像、効果音、及びユーザー端末が体感機能を備える場合に当該機能を制御する情報の内少なくとも一つを送信するステップであること、を特徴とするとしても良い。

【0026】請求項7記載の発明によれば、請求項1～6の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、情報処理システムから情報が提供される際、ユーザー端末で購入ステップをより楽しませる演出要素として、動画や効果音等の情報が追加される。

【0027】具体的には、例えば、カプセル型の代替物を仮想販売機から購入する設定で情報提供をする場合であれば、購入時に購入レバーやボタンが操作される動画を表示するための情報、仮想販売機の排出口からカプセルが排出される動画を表示するための情報、画面上方からカプセルがフレーム・インする動画を表示するための情報、カプセルが割れる動画を表示するための情報、中からアイコンが飛び出す動画を表示するための情報、及び各動画に付随させる効果音の情報などを追加送信する。こうした追加された演出要素の情報が、ユーザー端末上で再生されることで、ユーザーは従来のネットワークからのプログラムのダウンロードのような事務的な情報の入手ではなく、あたかも販売機から買った、手に入れたという感じを楽しむことができる。

【0028】その他、ユーザー端末にバイブレーション機能などが備えられていて、制御可能な場合は、振動発生させる情報を送信し、例えばレバーを回した時の振動や、カプセルが排出された際の振動を表現することもできる。

【0029】なお、こうしたステップは、情報の受信通知の目的だけでなく、送受信に時間を要する場合に、ユーザーを待たせ、飽きさせない効果があるので、適宜設定されるのが望ましい。

【0030】また、請求項8記載の発明のように、請求項1～7の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、前記示唆ステップには、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の全部又は一部を変更する変更ステップ（例えば、図13のステップS416～S417）が含まれるとしても良い。

【0031】請求項8記載の発明によれば、請求項1～7の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、前記示唆ステップに、代替物の提供順番を変更する変更ステップを設け、ユーザーの要求に従って、或いはランダムに実行されることで、より予想を複雑なものとする事ができる。

【0032】請求項9記載の発明は、請求項8記載の情報提供方法において、前記変更ステップは、前記情報提供ステップによる情報の提供毎に、前記提供順番に基づいて、順番待ち状態の情報の提供順番を変更するステッ

プであること、を特徴とする。

【0033】請求項9記載の発明によれば、請求項8と同様の効果を奏するとともに、情報提供の度に、提供順番の一部が変更される。例えば、ユーザーが仮想販売機から情報の代替物を購入する場合、代替物が排出口から排出され、中の代替物が一つ減るのを機会に、順番の変更が行われる。より具体的には、例えば、仮想販売機の所与のケース中に代替物が積み重なって配置されている場合、ケースの一番下から代替物を排出すると、その分の空間が生じ、積み重なっていた代替物が崩れる。情報処理システムは、その崩れを3次元シミュレーション、あるいは所与の関係にもとづいて、その一部の配置を変更する。そして、配置変更結果は、その後の示唆情報に反映される。したがって、配置が変化する不確定要素を含むことで、仮想販売機の仮想現実感をより効果的に高め、ユーザーにより楽しんでもらうことができる。

【0034】さらに、請求項10記載の発明のように、請求項8または9に記載の情報提供方法において、前記変更ステップは、ユーザー端末から変更要求を受信した場合に、前記提供順番の全部または一部の順番を変更すること、を特徴としても良い。

【0035】請求項10記載の発明によれば、請求項8または9の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザーは、示唆情報を入手して提供順番を確認し、どうしても気に入らない場合、所与の変更要求を送信することによって、提供順番を変更させることができる。

【0036】具体的には、例えば、ユーザーからの変更要求は、仮想販売機を「ゆする」「ひっくり返す」「かきまわす」といった動作が用意され、情報処理システムが、何れかの変更要求を受けると、動作の種類に応じた規模で提供順番が変更され、また動作を示す動画を表示するための情報が送信される。ユーザー端末の画面では、仮想販売機が、揺すられ、ひっくり返され、かき混ぜられる動画が表示される。そして、提供順番の変更は、その後の示唆情報に反映される。

【0037】さらに、ユーザー端末における入力方法を、例えば、「ゆすり」ならば上下順に繰り返す連続的に操作する、「かきまわす」ならば、上右下左の順にぐるり回すような操作をする、といった具合に、所与の操作キーをそれぞれの動作を連想させるような順に設定するならば、ユーザーに対して、あたかもユーザー端末表示画面内の仮想販売機に対してアクションをしているかのような感じを与えることができる。

【0038】しかし、変更ステップによる配置の変更は、シミュレーションや乱数の発生などによって、所与の関係によってなされるのであって、必ずしもユーザーの望む提供順番に変更されるとは限らない。また、ここで、変更ステップの要求をすると、所与の確立で架空の管理人に発見され遊戯媒体の一部没収などの罰を受けるなどの設定を設けると、ユーザーに対して「罰はこわ

い」、「悪あがきかもしれない」、「でも、もしかしたら良い配置に変わるかもしれない」といういたずらっ子の気持ちに似た楽しさを与えることもできる。

【0039】請求項1記載の発明は、請求項1～10の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、前記代価として所与の遊戯媒体（例えば、図2の仮想コイン50）を用いること、を特徴とする。

【0040】請求項1記載の発明によれば、請求項1～10の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザーは遊戯媒体を使って情報の提供を受ける。遊戯媒体とは、情報提供を受けるためにルール上必要なアイテムであって、例えば、メダル、コイン、紙幣の他、ゲームやサイト上の仮想的な仮想コイン、仮想紙幣、あるいはポイントなどである。遊戯媒体は、情報処理システムより所与量与えられても良いし、公知の課金システム（例えば、クレジット・カード・システム、携帯電話会社の料金徴収システムなど）を利用して、所与のレートで料金と引き換えに発給するとしても良い。そして、購入の際には、例えば、仮想コインを仮想販売機のコイン投入口に入れる等のステップを経ることで、単純な電子的な料金の引落としと引き換えの情報提供ではなく、商品を購入する実在感をもたらすことができる。

【0041】また、請求項1記載の発明のように、請求項11に記載の情報提供方法において、ユーザー端末からユーザー登録情報を受信する登録情報受信ステップ（例えば、図11のステップS104～S201）と、前記受信したユーザー登録情報にしたがってユーザー或いはユーザー端末を、登録ユーザー或いは登録ユーザー端末として登録・管理する登録ステップ（例えば、図11のステップS203からS208）と、登録ユーザー或いは登録ユーザー端末に対して、所与の時間間隔毎に所与量の遊戯媒体を累積的に割り当てる割当ステップ（例えば、図11のステップS209～S211）と、を含むとしても良い。

【0042】請求項1記載の発明によれば、請求項11と同様の効果を奏するとともに、情報処理システムは、登録されたユーザーまたはユーザー端末に対して所与の時間毎に遊戯媒体が支給される。具体的には、例えば、一月当たり所定の料金と引き換えに1日あたり3枚の仮想コインが割り当てられるならば、1日あたりの利用回数に限度が設けられることになり、未成年者の過度の利用を予め規制することができる。

【0043】また、例えば、情報処理システムが、ユーザー端末から提供要求を受信した時に、遊戯媒体を一つずつ割り当てる場合、所与の時間間隔を置いて割り当てを行うならば、ユーザー端末のアクセスを制御することができる。したがって、100人のユーザーが一台の仮想販売機を次から次へと利用するために、示唆情報がめまぐるしく変化し、じっくりとほしい情報の購入タイミングを予測する本発明の楽しみが阻害される事態を未然

に防ぐことができる。

【0044】請求項13記載の発明は、請求項12記載の情報提供方法であって、前記割当ステップには、前記所与量の遊戯媒体を割り当てた場合に上限を超えるか否かを判定するステップが含まれ、上限を超えないと判定された場合に前記所与量の遊戯媒体を割り当てるステップであること、を特徴とする。

【0045】請求項13記載の発明によれば、請求項12と同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザーまたは登録ユーザー端末が保有できる遊戯媒体に上限を設ける。具体的には、例えば、登録ユーザーには1日3枚の仮想コインが配給され、その保有上限を10枚と設定するならば、もし4日以上利用することがなければ、せっかく配給されたコインが無駄になることになる。したがって、ユーザーにこまめな利用を促すことができる。

【0046】請求項14記載の発明は、請求項1～13の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、ユーザー端末から送信される通告条件を受信するステップ（例えば、図12のステップS700）と、順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番が前記通告条件を満足するか否かを判定するステップ（例えば、図12のステップS700）と、前記判定により前記通告条件を満足すると判定した場合に、当該通告条件を送信したユーザー端末にその旨の情報を送信するステップ（例えば、図12のステップS700）と、を含むことを特徴とする。

【0047】請求項14記載の発明によれば、請求項1～13の何れか一つと同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザーがほしい情報の順番待ちの状況を、ユーザーに知らせる「お知らせメール」機能を備える。

【0048】具体的には、例えば、情報が画面内の仮想販売機によって提供される場合、ある仮想販売機内にどうしてもほしい情報があり、その情報は、あと5回後に購入すれば手に入れることができそうであるとする。ユーザーは、通告条件として対象とする仮想販売機と、対象の仮想販売機から4回購入がなされた場合を設定する。すると、情報処理システムは、通告条件が満たされるとその旨のメールをユーザー端末に送信する。したがって、ほしい情報のために四六時中Webサイトにアクセスするような過度な使用を未然に防ぐとともに、仕事に忙しいビジネスマンであっても十分に本発明を楽しむことができる。その他の登録条件としては、例えば、仮想販売機内の情報の残数、新しい仮想販売機の設置の有無、新しい情報の補充の有無など適宜設定可能である。

【0049】請求項15記載の発明は、請求項1～14の何れか一つに記載の情報提供方法において、前記要求受信ステップにより受信した提供要求を送信したユーザー端末と、所与の期間内に提供要求を受信した回数とを対応付けて記憶するステップと、前記受信した回数に基づいて、前記提供要求を送信したユーザー端末に、順番待ち状態の情報を送信するか否かを判定するステップ

と、を含み、前記情報提供ステップは、前記判定により送信すると判定された場合に、順番待ち状態の情報を送信するステップであること、を特徴とする。

【0050】請求項15記載の発明によれば、請求項1～14の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザー端末に対して時間あたりで利用できる情報提供回数の上限を設定する。具体的には、例えば、1日あたり5回まで利用できると設定することで、未成年の過度の利用や、自作のプログラムを駆使しての短時間連続使用などに対して予め制限をかけることで、健全な利用を保証することができる。

【0051】請求項16記載の発明によれば、請求項1～15の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、ユーザー端末の位置情報を取得するステップ、または、情報処理システムの位置情報を取得するステップの少なくとも何れか一方を含み、且つ、前記情報提供ステップが、該位置情報に応じて、提供する情報の内容を変化させる位置対応ステップと、を含むことを特徴とする。

【0052】請求項16記載の発明によれば、請求項1～15の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、ユーザー端末あるいは情報処理システムの位置に応じて提供される情報に種類を持たせる。具体的には、例えば、ユーザー端末が、GPS機能や、PHS等に実用化されている公知の位置情報提供サービス等を利用して、利用時の地理的な位置情報、或いは高度情報などを送信する。また、情報処理システムであれば、例えば、ユーザー端末と同様の機能を利用して位置情報を取得する、或いは、設置場所の住所やビル等の階数を予め記憶しておいて位置情報とする。そして、例えば、位置情報が観光地等を示す場合であれば、ご当地にちなんだ風景、建物、産物などを提供する情報に含み、高層建築物や山や峠等の高所を示す場合であれば、高さにちなんだ天使をモチーフにした情報を提供するという差別化ができる。したがって、ユーザーに、いろいろな場所に出かけてコレクションを増やす楽しさを提供することができる。

【0053】請求項17記載の発明は、請求項1～16の何れかに記載の情報提供方法において、ユーザー端末からユーザー登録情報を受信するステップと、前記受信したユーザー登録情報に従って所定の物品またはサービスを提供するステップと、を含むことを特徴とする。

【0054】請求項17記載の発明によれば、請求項1～16の何れかと同様の効果を奏するとともに、情報の提供に係るサービスの一環として、情報以外のサービスや物品の提供をする。

【0055】具体的には、例えば、提供する情報に、提供される情報のシリーズ全体または一部をまとめて取得できる引き換えチケットに相当するパスワードを付与する。そして、該パスワードとユーザー登録情報を受信し、該登録情報に基づいて、情報を記憶したCD-ROM、MO、メモリーカード、DVDなどの情報記憶媒体

を、ユーザーに提供する。従って、情報量が多い場合には、全ての情報を通信で対応する場合に比べ費用が少なく抑えことができ、またユーザー端末の情報記憶容量が少ない場合にも対応して情報の提供ができる。なお、別途提供されるサービスや物品としては、その他、例えば、キャラクターグッズやぬいぐるみ等の景品といったものや、ファンの集いへの入場チケットなどであっても良く、適宜設定して良い。

【0056】請求項20記載の発明の情報記憶媒体は、請求項19記載の情報取得プログラムを記憶することを特徴とする。

【0057】この請求項20記載の発明によれば、請求項19記載の発明と同様の効果を奏する情報記憶媒体を構成することができる。

【0058】

【発明の実施の形態】[第1の実施形態]以下、本発明の第1の実施形態について、図1～図21を参照して説明する。第1の実施形態は、ユーザーが情報端末装置（以下、ユーザー端末）として携帯電話機を使用し、仮想販売機の画像をユーザー・インターフェースとして、ユーザー端末と通信自在なサーバーとの間で、データの提供を受ける場合の一例である。

【0059】[構成の説明]図1は、本発明が実施されるシステムの概要を説明する図である。同図に示すように、第1の実施形態では、データを提供する情報提供装置であるサーバー200と、ユーザーから情報提供の代金を徴収する課金サーバー800とを含む情報処理システムが、情報伝達の媒体である電気通信回線としてのインターネット400を介して、サーバー200および課金サーバー800とデータの送受信自在なユーザー端末600と接続されている。

【0060】サーバー200は、公知の汎用コンピュータ、あるいはパーソナルコンピュータなどであって、CPUと、ICメモリと、補助記憶装置と、CD或いはMOといった外部記憶媒体を読み込み自在な外部記憶媒体読込装置と、キーボードやマウスなどの入力装置と、ディスプレイ等の表示装置と、インターネット400に接続するための通信装置とが、システムバスを介して接続されている。サーバー200は、インターネット400に対して常時接続されており、WWWサーバーとしての機能を備える。そして、サーバー200は、本発明におけるデータ提供のためのWebサイトに係るサイト情報や、提供するプログラムやデータ等を格納しており、サイト情報に基づいてインターネット400上に、Webページ等を公開する。サーバー200は、このサイトに対してアクセスしてきた情報端末装置、即ちユーザー端末600に対して、Webページを構成する文書データ、画面データ、音楽データ等を送信する。ユーザー端末600は、受信したデータに基づく画面を表示し、ユーザーにWebページを閲覧させる。

【0061】図2は、ユーザー端末600の一例を示す外観図である。同図に示すように、ユーザー端末600は、CPUやICメモリ等からなる制御装置（図省略）と、数字などの操作ボタン642、十字操作キー644、ソフトキー646等の入力装置と、小型LCDディスプレイ66等の表示装置と、無線通信を行う無線装置68等が、システムバスを介して接続される公知の携帯電話機である。ユーザー端末600は、無線電話機としての機能だけでなく、インターネット400上に公開されているWebサイトへアクセスし、Webページの閲覧が可能なインターネット機能を備え、さらに、Webサイトからダウンロードされたプログラム、または内蔵された所与のプログラムを実行することによって、音声データや映像データの再生、ゲームプレイなどの種々の機能を追加・実現することが可能である。本実施形態におけるユーザー・インターフェースである仮想販売機の画像を表示するための情報は、Webサイトへのアクセスによって得ることもできる。

【0062】図2(a)の例では、表示装置66に、本実施形態におけるユーザー・インターフェースである仮想販売機10の一例が表示されている。仮想販売機10は、コンテンツを封入したカプセルCを販売する設定である。ユーザーは、まず、Webサイトにアクセスして、所与の課金システムをへて仮想コイン50を手に入れる。そして、仮想コイン50を使って仮想販売機10でカプセルCを購入すると、それぞれのカプセルCに対応するコンテンツ（例えば、画像、音声、音楽、テキスト、ゲームプログラム等の各種データ）がユーザー端末600に送信され入手することができる。図2(b)は、送信されたコンテンツを、携帯電話機の待ち受け画面にしている例である。なお、ユーザー端末600は、携帯電話機に限らず、同様の機能を備えたPHS、PDA、パソコン、ゲーム機等であってもかまわない。

【0063】課金サーバー800は、ユーザーへの料金請求およびユーザーの銀行口座等からの引き落とし等を管理する機能を備える。現在までに、例えば、クレジット会社や、ユーザー端末600の通信サービス会社によって、種々の形態が実用化されており、ここでの詳細な説明は省略する。なお、課金サーバー800を、サーバー200の中に設け、インターネット400を介さずに実現しても良い。

【0064】[機能ブロックの説明]次に、本実施形態を実現する機能ブロックについて説明する。図3は、本実施形態の機能ブロック図である。本実施形態は、提供するコンテンツを保有して情報提供のためのWebサイトを公開するサーバー200と、インターネット400と、情報を取得するユーザー端末600と、課金サーバー800と、を備える。

【0065】サーバー200は、処理部220と、記憶部240と、コンテンツ・データベース（以下、コンテ

ンツDB）290と、を備える。

【0066】処理部220は、情報提供における種々の演算処理やプログラム処理を実行する。処理部220は、特に、WWWサーバーとしての機能を担うWebサーバー部222と、仮想販売機10に関する種々のデータ管理を行う販売機管理部224と、本発明においてデータ提供を受けるユーザーの情報を管理するユーザー管理部226と、公知の通信を利用する課金サーバー800と通信を行ってユーザーからデータ提供の代価を徴収する課金管理部228と、仮想販売機10を仮想空間内に構築し所与の視点からの画像を生成する画像生成部229と、を備え、CPU、DSP、ASIC、各種ICメモリなどのハードウェアによって実現される。

【0067】具体的には、Webサーバー部222は、記憶部240のWebサイトプログラム242によって実現され、サイト情報252に基づいて、インターネット400上にWebサイトを公開し、アクセスしてきたユーザー端末600との間で、例えば、メニュー画面の情報や、仮想販売機10の画像情報など種々のデータを送受信する。

【0068】販売機管理部224は、記憶部240の販売機管理プログラム244によって実現され、販売機管理テーブル254、カプセル管理テーブル255、コンテンツ管理テーブル259を用いて、Webサイト上に設けられた仮想販売機10の管理を司り、例えば、販売機ごとのカプセルCの配置、購入に伴うカプセルCの残数変更、利用制限、カプセルCの補充などの管理を行う。より具体的には、販売機管理テーブル254は、図4に示すように、仮想販売機10ごとに、販売機ID、販売機のデザインID、販売する商品（データ）のシリーズ名、およびカプセル管理テーブル255のID、カプセルの総数（残数）、利用者制限数、利用者数、販売機の位置情報などが設定される。販売機のデザインIDは、ユーザー端末600に画面表示する際の、色や形状を規定するものであって、IDに対応した販売機デザイン・データ264は、記憶部240内に記憶されている。販売機デザイン・データ264は、例えば、販売機を形成するポリゴンのデータ、テキスト・データ、あるいはビットマップである。

【0069】カプセル管理テーブル255は、仮想販売機ごとに用意され、図5に示すように、カプセルCを個別に識別するためのカプセルIDと、カプセルCに封入するコンテンツを対応付けるコンテンツIDと、仮想販売機10内におけるカプセルCの位置情報（例えば、単なる連番、3次元座標値でも良い）と、を設定する。仮想販売機10にカプセルCが補充されると、カプセル管理テーブル255には、カプセルCごとにデータが新たに設定され、ユーザーがカプセルCを取出す（購入する）と、該当するカプセルCのデータはテーブルから削除される。あるいは、カプセルCそれぞれのフラグ操作

によって、有無を設定しても良い。

【0070】図8は、コンテンツ管理テーブル259の構造を示す一例である。同図に示すように、コンテンツ管理テーブル259は、例えば、コンテンツ・データ自体の識別をするためのコンテンツIDと、各コンテンツの内容を小さく表記するアイコンのIDと、コンテンツの名称と、画像・音声・プログラム等のデータの区分と、カプセルCを補充する際のコンテンツの出現率と、カプセルCの画面表示特性と、コンテンツに付与されるユーザーが貯めることで所与のデータやサービスが受けられるポイント数、特別なサービス等を受けられる権利としてコンテンツに付与されるボーナスが、設定される。仮想販売機10にカプセルCが補充される場合には、コンテンツ管理テーブル259を参照し、コンテンツ毎の出現率に基づいて、カプセルCに割当(封入)される。ここで、カプセルCの画面表示特性としては、例えば、テキストチャ、輝度変化のパターン、コンテンツの内容をイメージさせるアイコンなどであって、記憶部240のカプセルデザイン・データ265に記憶される。

【0071】ユーザー管理部226は、記憶部240に記憶されるユーザー管理プログラム246によって実現され、Webサイトを利用するユーザー情報の登録・変更の処理や、ユーザーが設定した通告条件に達した場合に、ユーザーにその旨を知らせるメールを配信するユーザー・サービス(以下、お知らせメール)の処理などを、ユーザー管理テーブル256と、お知らせメール管理テーブル257とを用いて行う。

【0072】具体的には、ユーザー管理テーブル256は、図6に示すように、ユーザー識別のためのユーザー名、ユーザーID、パスワードと、データ通信のためのメールアドレスと、利用履歴情報を備える。利用履歴情報としては、例えば、所有する仮想コイン数、最新利用日時、その日の利用回数、獲得ポイント数などを記憶する。保有コイン数は、むやみに仮想コインをためて、一度に大量の買占め行為が行われるのを未然に防ぐ。具体的には、仮想コインの発給時に、所与の上限値と比較され上限値を超えての発給を行わないようにする。また、その日の利用回数を記憶し上限回数を設けることで、未成年者等が頻繁に利用するのを未然に防ぐ。その他、記憶項目は、適宜選択・追加してもかまわない。獲得ポイント数は、カプセルCに付与される所与のポイント数であって、これを貯めるとポイント数に応じて特別なサービスが受けられる。サービス内容としては、例えば、ポイントと特殊なコンテンツと交換できる、特殊な仮想販売機10が利用できる、或いは、所定の申し込み手続きを経て別途サービスや物品の提供を受けるなど適宜設定して良い。

【0073】お知らせメール管理テーブル257は、図7に示すように、お知らせメールを発信させるためのユーザーが設定した種々の通告条件を記憶している。通告

条件としては、例えば、ユーザーID、通知条件の判定対象とする販売機ID、当該販売機のカプセルの残数、申し込み時以降の排出カプセル数、補充があった場合の通知、或いは新規販売機の設置時の通知などが挙げられる。

【0074】課金管理部228は、記憶部240の課金管理プログラム248によって実現し、ネットワークを介して公知の課金サーバー800を利用してユーザーから代価を徴収する。そして、仮想コイン一枚当りの代価、あるいは月額あたりの利用料金代価などのかたちで代価が徴収されたならば、ユーザー管理部226が仮想コインをユーザーに配給する。

【0075】記憶部240は、データ提供に必要な各種のプログラムおよびデータを格納し、CD-ROM、ICカード、ハードディスク、MO、DVD、ICメモリなどの情報記憶媒体によって実現される。

【0076】記憶部240には、効果データ266が含まれる。効果データ266は、種々のステップで購入をより楽しんでもらうための、効果演出を目的としたデータであって、例えば、レバー操作時の効果音や、ユーザー端末600のバイブレーション機能を作動させる情報、カプセルCの開封時の効果音や、音楽等がある。その他、「ゆすり」動作等で登場するキャラクターの画像等もここに含まれ、適宜設定されて良い。

【0077】コンテンツDB290は、本発明によってユーザーに提供されるコンテンツのデータを格納し、例えば、RAID機能を備えたハードディスク、ICメモリ、CD-ROM、MO、DVDなどのハードウェアによって実現できる。コンテンツとしては、例えば、ユーザー端末600の待ち受け画面データや、メールに添付可能な画像データ、呼び出し音やシステム音などの音声データ、所与のゲームプログラム、待ち受け時計などのプログラム、所与のサイトにアクセスできるあるいは特別なメールを配信してもらえパスワードなど、種々の形態が考えられ、情報提供者が適宜製作・設定する。

【0078】コンテンツDB290内のデータは、コンテンツ本体に相当するデータ(例えば、ユーザー端末600の待ち受け画面や、音楽データ、動画データなど)と当該データの内容をイメージさせるアイコンとのセットとして記憶され、それぞれにコンテンツIDが付けられている。処理部220はコンテンツDB管理プログラム249を用いて、適宜データを読み出してユーザーに送信・提供する。また、必要に応じてデータの更新等を行う。

【0079】ユーザー端末600は、情報端末装置としての機能を有する公知の多機能無線電話装置であって、ブラウザ部620と、入力部640と、表示部660とを備える。ブラウザ部620は、インターネット400上のWebサイトにアクセスし、サーバー200から送信されたデータに基づいてWebサイトを閲覧すること

ができる、公知のWWW閲覧機能やJ A V A (R) 等による専用アプリケーションソフトによって実現されるデータ送受信機能を備える。ブラウザ部620は、ユーザー端末600に内蔵されるCPU、DSP、ASIC、ICメモリなどのハードウェア上で、内蔵されるソフトウェアを実行することによって実現される。同様に、ブラウザ部620を介してインターネット400からダウンロードした所与のプログラムを実行することによって、ゲームなどの種々の機能を追加・実行することもできる。入力部640は、操作ボタン642や、十字操作キー644などの入力装置によって実現され、表示部660は、小型のLCDディスプレイ66等の表示装置によって実現できる。

【0080】〔仮想販売機の説明〕次に、図9～図10を参照して、本実施形態において販売の視覚対象となるカプセルCと、その販売機である仮想販売機10について詳細を説明する。図9は、仮想販売機10にて販売されるカプセルCの外観の例を示す図である。ここで言うカプセルCとは、提供される情報の代替物であって、略球形のカプセルを模した3Dオブジェクトからなる。一つの仮想販売機10にて販売されるカプセルCは全て同じ大きさで、中には具体的な商品に相当する各種のコンテンツが封入されている設定である。

【0081】コンテンツとしては、例えば、ユーザー端末600の待ち受け画面やメールに添付可能なコブタの画像データ、呼び出し音やシステム音などの音声データ、所与のゲームや待ち受け時計などのプログラム、所与のサイトにアクセスできるパスワード、特別なメールを配信してもらえらるパスワード、或いは所定の申し込みによって別途、サービスや物品の提供を受けられるチケット・データなど、種々の形態が考えられる。どのカプセルCにどのコンテンツが封入されるかは、仮想販売機10にカプセルCが補充される際に、販売機管理部224により、記憶部240のコンテンツ管理テーブル259の設定に基づいて行われる。ここでデータ提供者が、コンテンツ管理テーブル259の出現率を適宜設定するならば、コンテンツに手に入りやすく、即ちレア度を付与することが可能となる。したがって、コンテンツに所与のコレクション性をもたせることで、よりユーザーに購入してもらい楽しみと意欲をもってもらうことができる。

【0082】また、カプセルCは、封入される各コンテンツに応じた表示特性を備える。図9は、種々の形態の例を示す図である。例えば、図9(a)はコンテンツのアイコンが表示された状態で、ユーザーが所望するコンテンツを識別し易い。また、何が出るかわからない楽しさを強調するならば、コンテンツのレア度に応じた表示パターンを行っても良い。例えば、図9(b)は特典つきアイテムに相当するコンテンツであって星印がいている。一方、図9(c)は出願率が高いコンテンツで、単

純なツートンカラーで表示されている。こうした、カプセルCの表示特性は適宜設定可能であって、仮想販売機10ごとに設けられたカプセル管理テーブル255によって設定され、販売機管理部224によって管理される。

【0083】図10は、カプセルCを販売する仮想販売機10の外観を示す斜視図である。図10(a)に示すように、仮想販売機10は、ユーザーに順番待ち状態の情報に係る提供順番の示唆情報を表示する仮想器物であって、前記略球形のカプセルCを無作為順に配置し、かつ、外部からカプセルCの配置の様子を観察することができるオブジェクト配置部11と、外部からカプセルCの配置様子を容易には観察することができないように、不透明な部位に囲まれてオブジェクト配置部11の下部に配置され、且つ、カプセルCを下から順に選択して排出するオブジェクト排出部12とを備える。また、オブジェクト排出部12の表側の面(装置としての表面とする任意の縦立面)には、カプセルCの排出を実行させる購入レバー13と、カプセルCの排出口14と、仮想コインのコイン投入口15と、を備える。

【0084】カプセルCは、図10(b)に示すように、前述のように所与の大きさを有する3Dオブジェクトとして、オブジェクト配置部11内に無作為順に並べられ、位置情報はカプセル管理テーブル255にてXYZの各座標値として記憶される。ユーザーが、ユーザー端末600から購入を決定する操作をすると、購入レバー13を操作するイベントを経て、オブジェクト排出部12の下から順にカプセルが選択され、排出口14から排出される。また、オブジェクト配置部11内にカプセルCを攪拌する攪拌棒16を設けて、ユーザーがカプセルCの配置を変化させる機会を設けても良い。

【0085】こうした仮想販売機10はサーバー200内において3次元仮想空間内にオブジェクトとして構築され、販売機の位置、販売するカプセルの種類、表示特性、カプセルの残数など販売機の状態は、販売機管理テーブル254によって記憶され、販売機管理部224によって管理される。

【0086】本実施形態では、特に、仮想販売機10の外観的特長を、1960年代ごろから商店などの店頭配置され、子供に対して小額の硬貨でカプセルに封入された玩具等を販売する公知のカプセル販売装置をイメージさせるものとしている。この様に、意識的に公知の販売装置を模することで、使用方法の説明を必要とせず、ユーザーがすぐに楽しむことができるとともに、例えば、1960年代のレトロなデザインにすることによって、懐古的な趣向を付加してユーザーに提供することができる。

【0087】〔情報提供の処理の説明〕次に、本実施形態における情報提供方法の処理の流れについて図を参照して説明する。図11～図14は情報提供の処理の流れ

を示すフロー図であって、図15～図21は、情報提供の処理中にユーザー端末600である携帯電話機に表示される画面の一例である。

【0088】図11は、Webサイトへのアクセスからユーザーの登録情報の受信・登録までの処理の流れを示すフロー図である。図11によれば、仮想販売機10からデータを購入するために、まずユーザー端末600がインターネット閲覧機能を使って、仮想販売機10を設置するWebサイトにアクセスする(ステップS100)。サーバー200は、Webページ表示に必要なHTMLファイル、画像情報、動画表示のための情報等を送信(ステップS101)する。次いで、本実施形態の情報提供を、ユーザー登録して定額利用するか、または、お試しとして従属料金方式で利用するかの利用条件の入力要求を促すテキストや、利用条件の選択をするボタン、及びユーザー登録情報(例えば、ユーザー名とパスワード等)の入力欄等を画面表示する情報を送信する(ステップS103)。

【0089】ユーザー端末600では、Webページが表示され(ステップS102)、ユーザー登録して定額利用するか、または、お試しとして利用するかを選択される。ユーザー登録の場合はさらに登録情報が入力され送信される(ステップS104)。

【0090】サーバー2が、利用条件および登録情報を受信すると、お試し利用の場合は(ステップS201のYES)、そのまま課金システムによって所与の枚数(ここでは1回のアクセルに3枚まで)の仮想コインが発給される(ステップS211)。ユーザー登録利用の場合は(ステップS201のNO)、ユーザー管理テーブル256が参照され、未登録であれば(ステップS203のYES)、新規にパスワード登録を行う(ステップS205)。ユーザー名が登録されていれば(ステップS203のNO)、パスワードチェックを行い、パスワードが一致しなければ、パスワードの再入力促すテキストおよび入力欄を表示する情報が送信され(ステップS207のNG)、ユーザー端末600でパスワードの再入力を行う(ステップS208)。

【0091】パスワードの登録・チェックが終了したならば、次に、ユーザー管理テーブル256の保有コイン数が参照される。遊戯媒体(仮想コイン)の所有数が上限値を超えていなければ(ステップS209のYES)、公知の課金システムを利用して、代価と引き換えに、新たに所与の枚数が発給されユーザー管理テーブル256が更新される(ステップS211)。上限値を越えている場合は(ステップS209のNO)、新たな仮想コインは発給されない。

【0092】図12は、情報提供処理において、ユーザーの登録情報の受信・登録までの処理につづくメニュー画面操作の流れを示すフロー図である。同図によれば、仮想コインが発給されたならば(ステップS211)、

サーバー2は、仮想コインの枚数と、Webページのメニュー画面の情報を送信する(ステップS301)。

【0093】サーバー200から受信した情報にもとづいて、ユーザー端末600に、仮想コイン枚数とメニュー画面が表示される(ステップS302)。図15は、メニュー画面の一例である。画面をスクロールすることによって、破線部まで選択可能になる。図15に示すように、メニュー画面では、仮想販売機10が設置される店頭ページと、新しい販売機の設置情報などを掲載する掲示板ページと、お知らせメールの申し込みページと、ポイントの交換ページと、使い方の説明ページと、終了とが選択可能である。カプセルCを購入するには、店頭ページを選択する(ステップS306のYES)。

【0094】ユーザー端末600で、十字操作キー644等で希望するページが選択されると、選択されたページを示す情報が送信される(ステップS304～S314)。サーバー200では、図12に示すように、選択されたページに係る各種処理(ステップS400、S500、S600、S700)が実行され、処理が終了すると、再びメニュー画面の情報が送信される。ユーザー端末600の画面はメニューの選択に戻る(ステップS304)。なお、掲示板表示処理(ステップS500)、ポイント交換処理(ステップS600)、メール処理(ステップS700)に関しては、公知の技術の利用で実現できるので、ここでの説明は省略する。

【0095】次に、図13を参照して店頭ページにおける処理(ステップS400)について具体的に説明する。サーバー200が、ユーザー端末600からの店頭ページを選択する信号を受信すると、記憶部240のサイト情報252から店頭ページ画面情報を読み出し送信する(ステップS401)。

【0096】ユーザー端末600に、店頭ページが表示される(ステップS402)。図16は、店頭ページの一例を示す図である。図16(a)は、商店の店先を模した背景に、複数の仮想販売機10が並んでいる様子を示し、画面中央の販売機が選択対象になっている。画面上部には選択対象となっている販売機のコンテンツのシリーズ名が表示されている。図16(b)は、テキスト表示の場合である。ユーザー端末600は、ソフトキー646で「もどる」が選択されると、ここでメニュー画面に戻る(ステップS404のYES)。十字操作キー644の左右操作により選択対象の販売機が変更され、ソフトキー646で選択決定されると、選択された仮想販売機10の販売機IDが送信される(ステップS404のNO→S406)。

【0097】サーバー200が、販売機の選択信号(例えば販売機のID)を受信したならば、記憶部240より該当する販売機管理テーブル254を読み出し(ステップS407)、処理部220で仮想販売機10の外観を示す画像を生成し送信する(ステップS409)。ユ

ーザー端末600では、図17に示すように、示唆情報として仮想販売機10の外観を示す画像が表示される(ステップS410)。ユーザーは、この画像で販売機の中に配置されたカプセルCの並びを観察し、自分がほしいデータが入っているカプセルの配置を確認し、購入するタイミングを予測する。ここで、例えば、ユーザー端末600の操作ボタン642の「1」が押されると拡大表示、「2」が押されると縮小表示の視点変更要求が送信され、十字操作キー644の何れかの方向を押すと、押された方向へ視点を回り込ませるような視点変更要求が送信される(ステップS412)。

【0098】サーバー200が、視点変更の信号を受信すると、処理部220が仮想空間内における視点を変更する諸計算を行い(ステップS413)、変更後の画像を生成して送信する(ステップS409)。ユーザー端末600に、視点変更された画像が表示される(ステップS410)。ユーザーは、望むだけ様々な角度から仮想販売機10を覗き込んで、所望するカプセルCが出てくるタイミングを予測する。

【0099】どうしても、現状のカプセルCの配列が気に入らない場合は、仮想販売機10を「ゆすり」「かきまわす」ことができる。これらは、変更ステップにあたる。例えば、「ゆすり」は、販売機を上下に揺らすことで、オブジェクト配置部11に積み重なったカプセルCの重なり状態を変える行為である。ユーザー端末600で、十字操作キー644が所与の時間間隔内に上下を繰り返し押し「ゆすり」のキー操作がされると、「ゆすり」要求が発信される(ステップS416)。サーバー200が、「ゆすり」の要求信号を受信したならば、乱数を発生させて部分的にカプセルCの配列を変更し、カプセル管理テーブル255を変更することによって(ステップS417)、変更した状態の画像を生成して送信する(ステップS409)。なお、ここでの画像生成に際しては、所与のタイマーカウントによって、所与の時間間隔を置いて画像を生成するものとし、多数のユーザーが同一の仮想販売機10を利用する場合に、カプセルCの配置(示唆情報)がめまぐるしく変化し、じっくりとほしい情報の購入タイミングを予測する、本発明の楽しさが阻害されるのを防ぐ。タイマーのカウント値は、アクセス数に応じて適宜設定されて良い。

【0100】ここで、ユーザー端末600で変更された仮想販売機10の画像が表示されるに際し、アニメーションを最初に挿入して視点の変更の操作との差別化をすると、購入する楽しさを演出することもできる。例えば、図18は、アニメーション画面の一例である。所与のキャラクターが登場して仮想販売機10を揺すっている。「かきまわし」の場合は、仮想販売機10内の攪拌棒16が回転して、より全体的な配置の変更がなされる設定とし、図19に示すようなアニメーション画面が挿入されても良い。

【0101】ユーザーが、購入前の観察を終え、購入を決めたならば、ユーザー端末600のソフトキー646で購入要求が入力される(ステップS418のYES)。ユーザー端末600の表示画面では、仮想コインの残数表示から所与の枚数が引かれる。

【0102】購入操作の信号を受信したらならば、サーバー200は、ユーザー管理テーブル256を参照し、その日の利用回数の上限(例えば、1日5回)と比較する(ステップS419)。利用上限を越える場合は(ステップS419のYES)、利用制限を行い、1日の利用回数の上限を超えるので利用できないことを伝えるテキストあるいはアイコン等の情報が送信され(ステップS421)、ユーザー端末600にその旨の表示がされる(ステップS422)。利用上限を越えない場合は(ステップS419のNO)、処理部220で後述するレバー操作画面に必要な画像データが生成され、効果音データ等とともに送信される(ステップS423)。また、ユーザー端末600にバイブレーション機能が備えられていて送信データで制御できる場合、レバーを回す振動を表現する振動情報をこれに付加しても良い。なお、同様に販売機管理テーブル254が参照され、コイン投入時に、選択した仮想販売機10が、他の利用者に既に利用されていて、ユーザーが利用することで所与の利用者制限数を越える場合には、同様に、利用制限が実行され、ユーザー端末600へ、その旨表示する情報が送信される。

【0103】ユーザー端末600に、レバー操作画面として、仮想販売機10の購入レバー13の拡大図が表示される(ステップS424)。図20は、レバー操作画面の一例である。ここで、例えば、所与の時間間隔内で、ユーザー端末600の十字操作キー644を、上→右→下→左といったように順に押されるといった、レバー操作がされると画面上で効果音とともにレバーが回転する画像が表示され、提供要求がサーバー200に送信される(ステップS426)。

【0104】サーバー200は、提供要求を受信するとカプセル管理テーブル255から、オブジェクト排出部12に最も近いカプセルCを排出対象として選択する。カプセルCに付与されていたポイントは、ユーザー管理テーブル256の獲得ポイント数に加算される(ステップS427)。そして、処理部220で、選択されたカプセルCのカプセル開封画像を生成し、割り当てられたコンテンツ・データとそのアイコンをコンテンツDB290より読み出し、該当する効果音データが効果データ266から読み出し、ともに送信する(ステップS429)。

【0105】カプセル開封画像データとコンテンツ・データとそのアイコンが受信されると、ユーザー端末600では、カプセル開封の画像を表示するとともにコンテンツ・データのアイコンを表示する(ステップS43

0)。図21は、カプセル開封画像の一例であって、中からコンテンツ・データのアイコンが飛び出している。

【0106】ここで、ユーザーは、入手したコンテンツ・データをユーザー端末600が備える機能で閲覧・再生する(ステップS432)。そして、入手したコンテンツは保存される(ステップS434)。保存されたデータは、例えば図2(b)のように、待ち受け画面などに適宜使用可能となる。保存が終了したならば、再び店頭ページ画面に戻る(ステップS406)。

【0107】なお、上記において、携帯電話機(ユーザー端末600)でのデータ通信においては、基地局とのデータ通信が、某かの影響で途中で中断した場合であっても、その中断した途中からデータ通信が再開されるものとする。

【0108】次に、図14を参照して、仮想販売機10へのカプセルCの補充処理を説明する。カプセルCの補充は、排出されるカプセルCが決定され、コンテンツ・データが送信された後に、サーバー200で実行される(図13のステップS900)。

【0109】図14は、サーバー200による順番設定ステップの詳細を示すフロー図である。順番設定ステップとして、サーバー200の販売機管理部224は、販売機管理テーブル254から、カプセルCの総数と残数を参照する(ステップS901)。

残数を所与の補充基準値(例えば、3個)と比較して、補充が必要ならば(ステップS903のYES)、販売機管理テーブル254のカプセル総数と残数から補充する数を求める(ステップS905)。そして、オブジェクト配置部11に求められた補充数だけのカプセルCをランダムに配置し、カプセル管理テーブル255に新たにIDと位置情報を記録する(ステップS907)。そして、コンテンツ管理テーブル259を参照し、コンテンツ毎の出現率に基づいてカプセルCにコンテンツの割り当てと表現特性を決定し、カプセル管理テーブル255を更新する(ステップS905)。補充が必要なければ(ステップS903のNO)、カプセルCの補充を完了する(ステップS911)。

【0110】以上のように、ユーザーが仮想販売機10中のカプセルCの配置を観察し、所望するカプセルCを得られるタイミングを予想して購入操作するので、ユーザーのこまめな示唆情報の観察と、タイミング予想の読み、運等によって、所望するカプセルCを得られる確立が変動する。したがって、ボタンを押すと決まった商品が提供される自動販売機でもなく、まるっきりどんな商品が提供されるかわからないおみくじ販売機でもない、ゲーム性、あるいはギャンブル性を備えた情報提供をすることができる。

【0111】なお、本発明は、以上にした例に限定さえるものではなく、本発明の趣旨を逸脱しない範囲内で適宜変更が可能であることは勿論である。

【0112】例えば、第1の実施形態では、仮想販売機10の形態およびカプセルCの配置方法も適宜変更可能であって、平面的なデザインとして、カプセルCの位置や順番を2次元として管理しても良い。また、「ゆすり」や「かきまわし」の処理時にのみ、タイマーカウントによって仮想販売機10の画像生成を遅らせたが、同様の処理を適宜ステップ間に設定してもかまわない。

【0113】また、多数のユーザーが同一の仮想販売機10を利用して、示唆情報が短時間で変化するのを防ぐために、保有する仮想コイン数に関係無く、サーバー200がユーザー端末600からの購入要求を受信したら、サーバー200が保有するコインの中から1枚ずつ仮想コインを支給するとして、支給時に所定の時間間隔をおくことで実現しても良い。

【0114】その他、仮想販売機10の画像をサーバー200で生成しユーザー端末600に送信したが、ユーザー端末600が相応の処理能力を備える場合は、サーバー200では、カプセルCの位置管理のみを行って、カプセルCの位置情報と、カプセルID情報を送信し、画像の生成をユーザー端末600によって行っても良い。この際、仮想販売機10を生成するためのデータは、サーバー200から利用に先立って販売機デザイン・データ264を取得しても良いし、或いはユーザー端末600で再生可能な情報記憶媒体によって配布を受け、別途読み込んでもよい。

【0115】また、コンテンツ・データとして、引換券に相当するチケット・データを設定し、公知の申し込み手段によって、ネットワークを介した情報提供のほか、別途サービスの提供や、実際の商品等が配送されるとしても良い。

【0116】[第2の実施形態]次に、図22～図23を用いて、第2の実施形態について説明する。なお、第1の実施形態と同様の構成要素については、同じ番号の符号をつけ、説明は省略するものとする。

【0117】第2の実施形態の情報提供方法は、ユーザー端末600としてパソコンを利用して、インターネットを介して、サーバーにアクセスした場合を例とする。第2の実施形態では、Webページ内に仮想器物(仮想販売機10)に相当する仮想のデリバリーショップ20から小人Dに情報を運んでもらう設定となっている。図22は、第2の実施形態における、ユーザー端末画面に表示されるWebページの一例を示す図である。ユーザーは、第1の実施形態と同様にして、所与のウェブサイトにアクセスし、ユーザー登録を経て遊戯媒体の発給を受ける。そして、ほしい情報を配達してくれる仮想デリバリーショップ20を選択すると、示唆情報として図22に示すような仮想世界に存在するデリバリーショップ20の配達風景画面を見ることが出来る。

【0118】図22に示すように、配達風景の画面には、操作系要素として、提供情報のシリーズ名の表示部

22と、購入要求を指示するオーダー・ボタン24と、遊戯媒体である仮想コイン表示部26と、並び替えのイベント発生を指示するイベント・ボタン28と、が含まれる。また、示唆情報系の要素として、仮想デリバリーショップ20と、配達員であり情報の代替物である小人Dと、ユーザーまで小人を乗せて配達に向かう配達車30と、イベント要素であるトイレ32などが含まれる。図22の例では、クリスマスに関する音楽や、パーティ招待状向けの画像や、パーティゲームのプログラムなどの各種コンテンツが提供される。

【0119】小人Dがどんな商品、即ち情報を持っているかは、ポイント34を当てて選択すると、小人Dが拡大表示され、より具体的な情報のイメージを得ることができる。図23は、小人Dの拡大図の一例を示す図である。小人Dは、手にコンテンツのアイコンを表示したオブジェクトEを抱えている。また、小人Dは、頭に装飾Fを備え、例えば、クォーターション・マークや星などで、入手頻度の低いコンテンツであることや、新しく追加されたコンテンツであることを、ユーザーに示唆する。

【0120】本実施形態の特徴の一つとしては、仮想世界を設定したことによる、変更ステップのイベント性がある。Webページに登場する小人達は、無機質な代替物ではないので、眠りもすれば仕事をさぼることもある。つまり、変更ステップとして、例えば、トイレ32に行く、眠くなる、雨が降る、犬が列に突っ込むなどのイベントを設定し、ユーザーの操作或いは乱数にしたがって種々のイベントが実施されることで、小人達が、列を離れ、あるいは慌てふためいて列が乱れることで配置位置が変更される。イベントによる並び替えは、示唆情報に反映され、ユーザー端末の列の様子が変化する過程がアニメーションなどで画像表示される。

【0121】具体的な購入の流れについては、第1の実施形態において、仮想販売機10を仮想デリバリーショップ20に、カプセルCを小人Dと抱えているオブジェクトEに、カプセルCの配置を小人Dの順番待ちの列に、レバー操作を配達車30の運行等の置き換えによって、同様の処理で実現できる。ただし、本実施形態では、イベントのアニメーション等が特徴となるので、記憶部240に別途アニメーション用のデータを保有する、あるいはユーザー端末600にアニメーションの処理をさせる等の変更が必要になる。

【0122】このように、Webページ上に、仮想世界を想定して、配置位置の変更を小人達の動作で表現し、イベントを見ること楽しさを付加することで、ユーザーの利用を促すことができる。また、小人のキャラクタとして、アニメ等の所与のキャラクタを利用することで、マーチャンダイジングの一環としての利用が可能となる。なお、イベントの種類は適宜設定可能であって、仮想デリバリーショップ毎に、あるいは季節毎にその内容

を変更しても良い。

【0123】以上のように、順番設定ステップとして仮想販売機10あるいは仮想世界を設定し、商品である情報(カプセルCあるいは小人の運ぶ荷物)が所与の順番で提供されることで、公知の自動販売機のように決まった購入ボタンを選択すると必ず決まった商品が提供されるとは限らず、購入のタイミングによってユーザーが得られる情報の内容が異なる。しかしその一方で、ユーザーは、示唆ステップによって、仮想販売機10内のカプセルCの並びや、小人の列を示唆情報として画像で観察し、提供順番をある程度予測できる。どうしても手に入れない情報がある場合は、他のユーザーが情報を購入することによって時間とともに変化する示唆情報をこまめに確認し、ユーザー自らがその購入のタイミングを予測することで、入手する確率を高くすることができる。

【0124】

【発明の効果】本発明による情報提供方法によれば、ユーザーは、例えば「ほしい商品が並んでいる」「このままでは、いつ他の誰かに購入されてしまうかもしれない」「しかし、ほしい商品が出るまで連続して購入することなく、少ない支払いで手に入れたい」というような、射幸心と、わずかな競争心、そして経済観念による心理的な揺らぎを経験する。これらは、従来の自動販売機やおみくじ販売機とは異なるゲーム感覚に類する楽しさであって、本発明による情報提供方法によれば、ユーザーに新しい楽しさを提供することができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】第1の実施形態における情報提供が実施されるシステムの概要を説明する図である。

【図2】第1の実施形態におけるユーザー端末である、携帯電話機の外観を示す図であって、(a)はユーザー・インターフェースが表示された状態を示す一例、(b)は提供された情報の利用状態を示す一例を示す。

【図3】第1の実施形態を構成する機能ブロックを示すブロック図である。

【図4】第1の実施形態における販売機管理テーブルの内容の一例を示す図である。

【図5】第1の実施形態におけるカプセル管理テーブルの内容の一例を示す図である。

【図6】第1の実施形態におけるユーザー管理テーブルの内容の一例を示す図である。

【図7】第1の実施形態におけるお知らせメール管理テーブルの内容の一例を示す図である。

【図8】第1の実施形態におけるコンテンツ管理テーブルの内容の一例を示す図である。

【図9】第1の実施形態において、仮想販売機で販売されるカプセルの外観の例を示す図である。

【図10】第1の実施形態における、仮想販売機の外観の一例を示す図である。(a)はカプセルが無い状態を、(b)はカプセルが入っている状態を示す。

【図11】第1の実施形態における処理を示すフロー図であって、Webサイトへのアクセスからユーザーの登録情報の受信・登録までの処理の流れを示す。

【図12】第1の実施形態における、処理の流れを示すフロー図であって、メニュー画面操作の流れを示す。

【図13】第1の実施形態における、処理の流れを示すフロー図であって、店頭ページにおける処理の流れを示す。

【図14】第1の実施形態における、処理の流れを示すフロー図であって、仮想販売機へのカプセルの補充処理の流れを示す。

【図15】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示されるメニュー画面の一例を示す図である。

【図16】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示される店頭画面の一例を示す図である。

【図17】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示される視点変更時の画面の一例を示す図である。

【図18】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示される「ゆすり」選択時の画面の一例を示す図である。

【図19】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示される「かきまわし」選択時の画面の一例を示す図である。

【図20】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示されるレバー操作画面の一例を示す図である。

【図21】第1の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示されるカプセルからコンテンツが出現する画面の一例を示す図である。

【図22】第2の実施形態における、ユーザー端末に表示されるWebページの一例を示す図である。

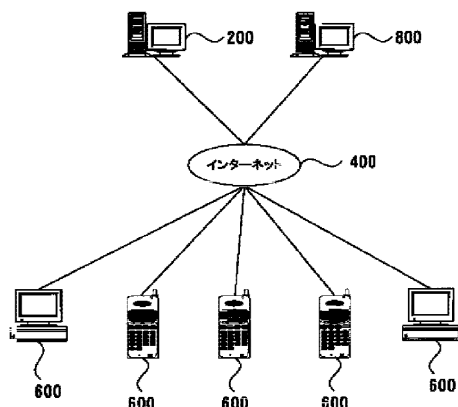
【図23】第2の実施形態における、小人の外観の一例

を示す図である。

【符号の説明】

- 10 仮想販売機
- 20 仮想デリバリーショップ
- 50 仮想コイン
- 200 サーバー
- 220 処理部
- 222 Webサーバー部
- 224 販売機管理部
- 226 ユーザー管理部
- 228 課金管理部
- 240 記憶部
- 242 Webサイトプログラム
- 244 販売機管理プログラム
- 246 ユーザー管理プログラム
- 248 課金管理プログラム
- 249 コンテンツDB管理プログラム
- 252 サイト情報
- 254 販売機管理テーブル
- 255 カプセル管理テーブル
- 256 ユーザー管理テーブル
- 257 お知らせメール管理テーブル
- 259 コンテンツ感知テーブル
- 264 販売機デザイン・データ
- 265 カプセルデザイン・データ
- 266 効果データ
- 400 インターネット
- 600 ユーザー端末
- 800 課金サーバー
- C カプセル
- D 小人

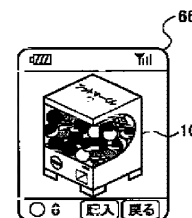
【図1】



【図5】

カプセルID	コンテンツID	位置情報

【図17】



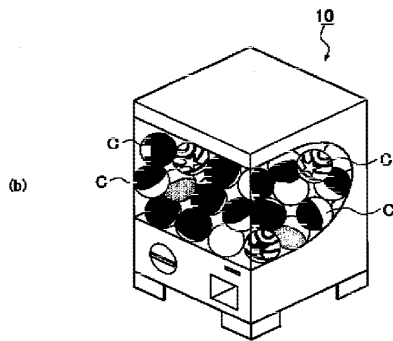
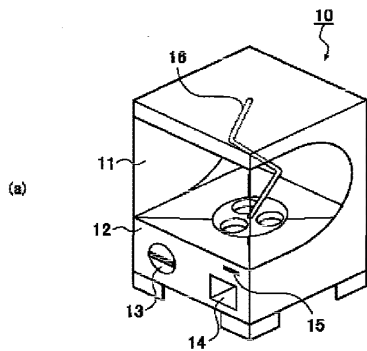
【図8】

コンテンツID	アイコンID	コンテンツ名	表示特性	データ区分	出現率	ポイント数	ボーナス

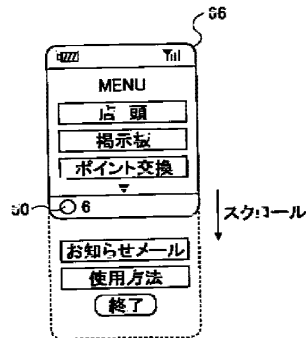
【図9】



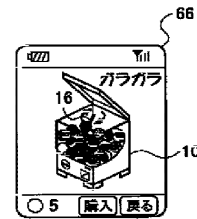
【図10】



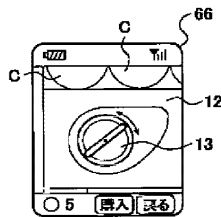
【図15】



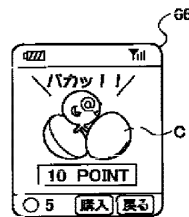
【図19】



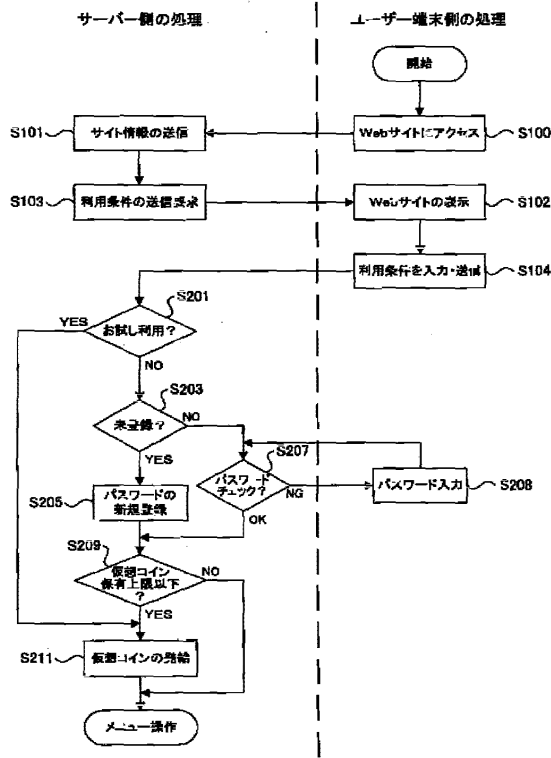
【図20】



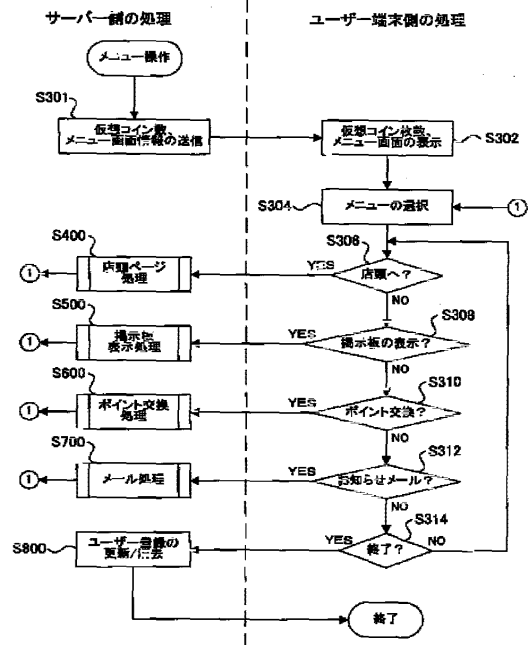
【図21】



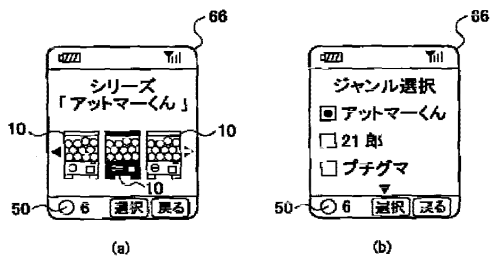
【図11】



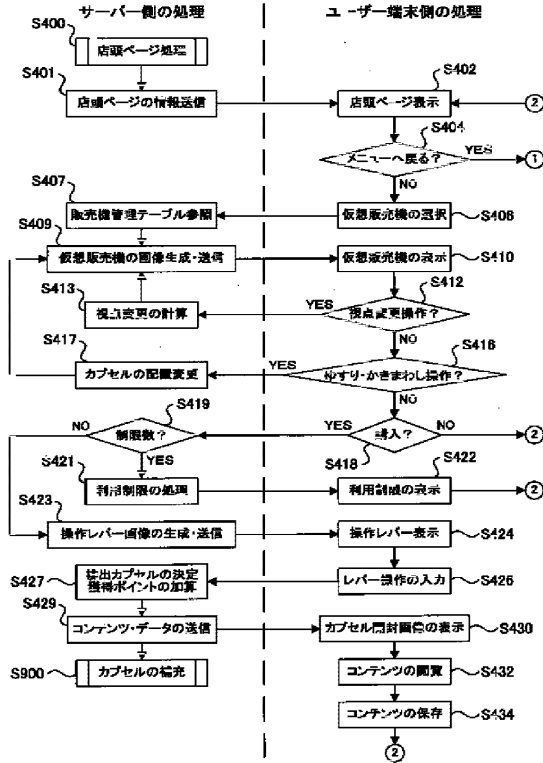
【図12】



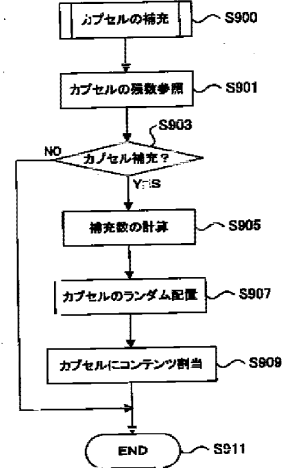
【図16】



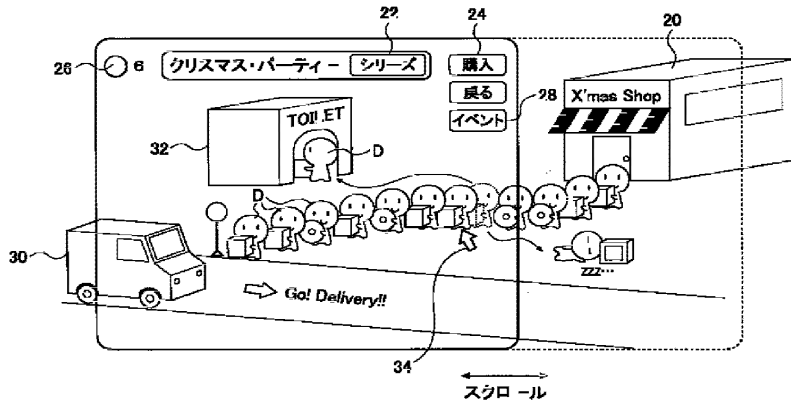
【図13】



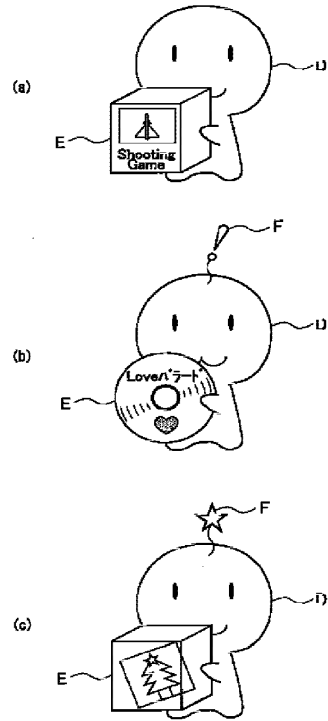
【図14】



【図22】



【図23】



フロントページの続き

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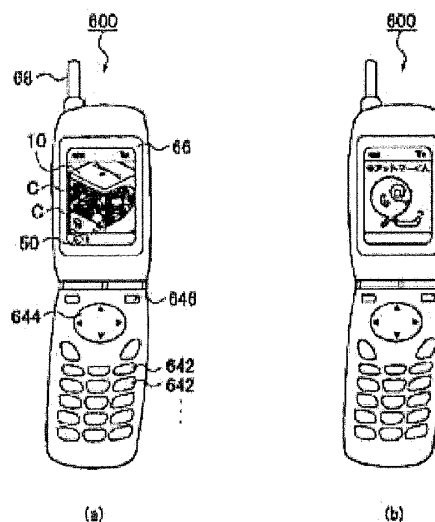
(72)Inventor : **WATABE HAJIME**

(54) METHOD, SYSTEM, AND PROGRAM FOR INFORMATION ACQUISITION, AND INFORMATION STORAGE MEDIUM

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To propose a new information providing method which gives an amusement.

SOLUTION: A virtual vending machine 10 which sells capsules C comprising allocated information to be provided is set as a user interface. Different kinds of information are allocated to the capsules C at a given ratio and the capsules are arranged in a random order in the vending machine and vended sequentially. The contents of information that users obtain are different according to the buying timing and the users win or lose. The users, on the other hand, observe how the capsules C are arranged and can predict the timing to obtain desired information and increase the probability of winning. Consequently, the user enjoy how to obtain desired information with a smaller number of trials just like enjoying a game by skillfully predicting the timing.



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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1]In an information service method with which an information processing system provides with a variety of information a user terminal connected via a communication network according to given offer turn,

An information service method comprising:

A turn setting step which sets up the aforementioned offer turn.

A suggestion step which transmits suggestion information which suggests all or a part of offer turn which starts information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information to a user terminal, A demand receiving step which receives a providing request transmitted from a user terminal, and an offer-of-information step which transmits information according to the aforementioned offer turn to a user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request in exchange for a given price.

[Claim 2]In Claim 1,

An information service method, wherein picture information of a virtual vessel characterized by comprising the following is contained.

A substitute corresponding to each information on the aforementioned turn waiting state in the aforementioned suggestion information.

A substitute placement part which can arrange the aforementioned substitute and can observe all or a part of offer turn of a substitute.

[Claim 3]An information service method, wherein picture information seen from a given viewpoint is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information in Claim 1.

[Claim 4]An information service method, wherein a step which changes a viewpoint is contained in the aforementioned suggestion step in Claim 3 and picture information based on a viewpoint which changed [aforementioned] is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information at least.

[Claim 5]An information service method, wherein it sets they to be [any of Claims 1-4] and picture information for every stage concerned which expresses details of offer turn gradually is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information.

[Claim 6]An information service method, wherein it sets they to be [any of Claims 1-5] and picture information displayed on the aforementioned suggestion information by a display style from which information on a turn waiting state differs according to classification of information is contained.

[Claim 7]An information service method which sets they to be [any of Claims 1-6], and is characterized by the aforementioned offer-of-information step being a step which transmits at least one of information which controls the function concerned when an image, a sound effect, and a user terminal expressing information being provided are provided with a somesthesia function further.

[Claim 8]An information service method, wherein it sets they to be [any of Claims 1-7] and a

change step which changes all or a part of offer turn concerning information on a turn waiting state is contained in the aforementioned suggestion step.

[Claim 9]An information service method characterized by the aforementioned change step being a step which changes offer turn of information on a turn waiting state based on the aforementioned offer turn for every offer of information by the aforementioned offer-of-information step in Claim 8.

[Claim 10]An information service method characterized by the aforementioned change step being a step which changes all or a part of turn of the aforementioned offer turn when a change request is received from a user terminal in Claim 8 or 9.

[Claim 11]An information service method setting they to be [any of Claims 1-10], and using given game mediums as the aforementioned price.

[Claim 12]In Claim 11,

An information service method comprising:

A registration information reception step which receives user's registration information from a user terminal.

A recording step which registers and manages a user or a user terminal as a registered user or a registered user terminal according to you sir registration information which received

[aforementioned], A quota step which assigns game mediums of given quantity cumulatively for every given time interval to a registered user or a registered user terminal.

[Claim 13]An information service method being a step which assigns game mediums of the given amount of above to the aforementioned quota step in Claim 12 when judged with a step which judges whether a maximum is exceeded or not being contained when game mediums of the given amount of above are assigned, and not exceeding a maximum.

[Claim 14]An information service method comprising:

A step which receives announcement conditions which set they to be [any of Claims 1-13], and are transmitted from a user terminal.

A step which judges whether offer turn concerning information on a turn waiting state satisfies the aforementioned announcement conditions, and a step which transmits information to that effect to a user terminal which transmitted the announcement conditions concerned when it judges with satisfying the aforementioned announcement conditions by the aforementioned judgment.

[Claim 15]A user terminal which transmitted a providing request which was set they to be [any of Claims 1-14], and was received by the aforementioned demand receiving step, A step which matches and memorizes the number of times of receiving a providing request, within a given period, Including a step which judges whether information on a turn waiting state is transmitted to a user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request based on the number of times of aforementioned receiving, the aforementioned offer-of-information step, An information service method being a step which transmits information on a turn waiting state when judged with transmitting by the aforementioned judgment.

[Claim 16]A step which sets they to be [any of Claims 1-15], and acquires position information on a user terminal, Or an information service method containing a step corresponding to a position to which the contents of information which the aforementioned offer-of-information step provides according to this position information including either at least of the step which acquires position information on an information processing system are changed.

[Claim 17]An information service method comprising:

A step which sets they to be [any of Claims 1-16], and receives user's registration information from a user terminal.

A step which provides predetermined goods or service according to user's registration information which received [aforementioned].

[Claim 18]In an information processing system which provides with a variety of information a user terminal connected via a communication network according to given offer turn,

An information processing system, wherein picture information seen from a given viewpoint of a virtual vessel characterized by comprising the following is contained.

A turn setting-out means to set up the aforementioned offer turn.

A suggestion means to transmit suggestion information which suggests all or a part of offer turn which starts information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information to a user terminal.

A request reception means which receives a providing request transmitted from a user terminal.

An offer-of-information means to transmit information to a user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request in exchange for a given price according to the aforementioned offer turn.

A substitute corresponding to each information on the aforementioned turn waiting state in the aforementioned suggestion information while having.

A substitute placement part which can arrange the aforementioned substitute and can observe all or a part of offer turn of a substitute.

A substitute discharge part which discharges a substitute according to arrangement orders.

A discharge port of a substitute, and an operating part which performs discharge of a substitute.

[Claim 19]In an information acquisition program for realizing a function in which an operation and control by a processor perform communication with an information processing system to information terminal equipment,

An information acquisition program including information for displaying an image seen from a given viewpoint of a virtual vessel characterized by comprising the following, and arranging a substitute in the aforementioned virtual vessel based on suggestion information.

A suggestion information acquisition means which receives all or a part of suggestion information on offer turn which starts information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information which provides a variety of information according to given offer turn.

A demand transmitting means which transmits a providing request of information to an information processing system.

An information acquisition means which receives information provided.

A substitute placement part which the aforementioned suggestion information acquisition means can arrange a substitute corresponding to each information on the aforementioned turn waiting state to the inside, and can observe all or a part of arrangement situations for this substitute while including information for making it function on the aforementioned information terminal equipment.

A substitute discharge part which discharges a substitute according to offer turn, a discharge port of a substitute, and an operating part which performs discharge of a substitute.

[Claim 20]An information storage medium which memorizes the information acquisition program according to claim 19.

[Translation done.]

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention]An information processing system transmits and receives data between user terminals via a communication network, and the present invention relates to the information service method etc. which provide various information.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art]In recent years, in information dealings of versatility, such as a program, an image, music, the dealings through a communication network which do not need the physical distribution of information storage media, such as CD-ROM and FD, are conducted briskly. On the Web page which an information processing system exhibits instead of a actual store institution as the method, for example, If the purchase request of goods which sets up the virtual sales place which displayed the information, including for example, a name, a functional description, the image of a brand image, the amount of money, etc., and purchase request button of goods, and he wishes from a user is received, For example, there is a method of making a user terminal download the information which is goods in exchange for the payment of a price, and providing information using a publicly known charge system.

[0003]When a screen display of the automatic vending machine of imagination is carried out to a user terminal as a user interface and the purchase request from a user is received, there is also the method of choosing goods at random by the server side, and providing a user in inside. In this case, unsurprisingly, since a user does not know what kind of information is provided, there is an effect which adds the enjoyableness looked at by a sacred oracle, bingo, etc. and trial-of-luck pleasure. The information service method through such a communication network has the short time which goods transfer takes compared with the information service method by the physical distribution of actual goods, and use has spread with expansion of a merit to the network which needs neither an employee nor a store institution.

[0004]

[Problem to be solved by the invention]However, the above conventional information service methods, Information needed like the example of the automatic-vending-machine system certainly provided and the latter to the demand of purchase like the former example, There are few information service methods which incline toward one of the sacred-oracle vending machine systems which are not understood what comes out in many cases, are in both interim existence, and gave enjoyableness to the acquisition of information itself.

[0005]Then, do not necessarily obtain information needed always, however, on the other hand, the problem given to the present invention by a user's efforts and reading, It is proposing the information service method provided with enjoyableness which becomes available about the information desired to some extent, giving a variation to an information service method, and getting a user to enjoy the acquisition work of information itself.

http://www4.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/cgi-bin/tran_web CGI_ejje?atw_u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww4.ipd... 1/7/2015

[0006]

[Means for solving problem]In order to solve the above problem, the invention according to claim 1 is provided with the following.

A turn setting step which an information processing system is an information service method which provides with a variety of information a user terminal connected via a communication network according to given offer turn, and sets up the aforementioned offer turn (for example, step S900 of Fig.14).

A suggestion step which transmits suggestion information (for example, Fig.17 – Fig.19) which suggests all or a part of offer turn which starts information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information to a user terminal (for example, steps S406–S417 of Fig.13).

The demand receiving step (Steps S418–S426 of Fig.13) which receives the providing request transmitted from a user terminal, An offer-of-information step which transmits information according to the aforementioned offer turn to a user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request in exchange for a given price (step S427–434 of Fig.13).

[0007]According to the invention according to claim 1, an information processing system, For example, data is transmitted [it is a system including the server which exhibits a website, the server which manages a given charge system etc., and] and received among user terminals, such as PDA, a cellular phone or a personal computer, via communication networks, such as the Internet and a cable TV. Under the present circumstances, if a user pays a predetermined charge as a price of informational service using a charge system, it is the agreement which can receive one offer of information from an information processing system. Hereafter, it is expressed as purchase for convenience.

[0008]By what it has a turn setting step especially in the present invention, and various information which is goods is provided for in given turn, It is characterized by a point with a possibility that the contents of the information from which the goods it was always decided that chose the buy button regular like a publicly known automatic vending machine are not always provided, and a user is obtained by the timing of purchase differ. That is, if it sees for a user, the information provided will have "hit/Separating."

[0009]However, on the other hand, the user can acquire the suggestion information, including for example, the screen where the silhouette of goods is displayed in order, and the text which described information content being located in a line according to offer turn etc., which can predict offer turn to some extent by a suggestion step. When there is information to surely get, and other users purchase information, the suggestion information which changes with time can be checked briskly, and probability coming to hand can be made high because the user himself predicts suitable purchase timing.

[0010]Therefore, according to the information service method by the present invention, a user, For example, "goods needed are located in a line" "the way things stand, The mental fluctuation by the speculative spirit and few competitive spirit of it being purchased by other someone when" and "however, I liking to get by little payment, without purchasing continuously until goods needed come out", and a sense of economy will be experienced. A conventional automatic vending machine and sacred-oracle vending machine are the pleasure similar to different game feeling, and according to the information service method by the present invention, these can provide a user with the pleasure of the purchase operation [itself].

[0011]In the information service method according to claim 1, like the invention according to claim 2, to the aforementioned suggestion information, It is good though the picture information of the virtual vessel (for example, virtual vending machine 10 of Fig.10) provided with the substitute placement part which can arrange the substitute (for example, the capsule C of Fig.9) corresponding to each information and the aforementioned substitute of the aforementioned turn waiting state, and can observe all or a part of offer turn of a substitute is contained.

[0012]To or the user terminal connected via a communication network like the invention according to claim 18, A turn setting-out means (for example, Web server part 222 of Fig.3, the vending machine Management Department 224) to provide a variety of information according to given offer turn and to be an information processing system and to set up the aforementioned offer turn, A suggestion means (for example, Web server part 222 of Fig.3, the image generation part 229) to transmit the suggestion information which suggests all or a part of offer turn which starts the information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information to a user terminal, The request reception means (for example, Web server part 222 of Fig.3) which receives the providing request transmitted from a user terminal, In exchange for a given price, to the user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request, While having an offer-of-information means (for example, Web server part 222 of Fig.3, the vending machine Management Department 224, contents DB290, the fee collection server 800) to transmit information according to the aforementioned offer turn, The substitute placement part which can arrange the substitute corresponding to each information and the aforementioned substitute of the aforementioned turn waiting state to the aforementioned suggestion information, and can observe all or a part of offer turn of a substitute to it, and the substitute discharge part which discharges a substitute according to arrangement orders (for example) It is good also considering the picture information seen from the given viewpoint of the virtual vessel provided with the object discharge part 12 of Fig.10, the discharge port (for example, 14 of Fig.10) of a substitute, and the operating part (for example, purchase lever 13 of Fig.10) that performs discharge of a substitute being contained as characteristics.

[0013]By or an operation and control according to a processor like the invention according to claim 19, It is an information acquisition program for realizing the function to perform communication with an information processing system to information terminal equipment, The suggestion information acquisition means (for example, browser section 620 of Fig.3) which receives all or a part of suggestion information on offer turn which starts the information on a turn waiting state among various kinds of aforementioned information which provides a variety of information according to given offer turn, The demand transmitting means (for example, browser section 620 of Fig.3) which transmits the providing request of information to an information processing system, While including the information for operating the information acquisition means (for example, browser section 620 of Fig.3) which receives the information provided as the aforementioned information terminal equipment, The aforementioned suggestion information acquisition means arranges the substitute corresponding to each information on the aforementioned turn waiting state to the inside, and it The substitute placement part which can observe all or a part of arrangement situations of this substitute, The substitute discharge part which discharges a substitute according to offer turn, and the discharge port of a substitute, It is good also considering including the information for displaying the image seen from the given viewpoint of the virtual vessel provided with the operating part which performs discharge of a substitute, and arranging a substitute in the aforementioned virtual vessel based on suggestion information as characteristics.

[0014]While generating the same effect as Claim 1 according to invention of the description to Claims 2, 18 and 19, On a Web page, it not only arranges merchandise information and a selection button, but. For example, a feeling of actual existence of purchase can be added more by displaying the user interface provided with the form of specific vending machines, such as a substitute equivalent to the information provided, and a discharge port (output port) of the part in which a substitute is stored, or goods.

[0015]The virtual vending machine which discharges specifically the substitutes (for example, a capsule, a character, etc.) of setting out which enclosed information, for example as a virtual vessel is displayed. The appearance may imitate the vending machine which exists really, and may be a design of imagination. And it sets to the condition which the view port attaches in part that can symbol-ize inside, and can see it or it is put into a substitute by the transparent case by the radar

function so that some virtual vending machines can observe the appearance of the substitute arranged in inside.

[0016]And if the image in a virtual vending machine is provided as suggestion information, an information processing system a user, If it observes which neighborhood the substitute (information) needed is arranged and purchases about what time in that situation [like] where it has looked into the inside of the virtual vending machine, prediction of whether to obtain a substitute (information) needed can be stood. The virtual vending machine where does not restrict the substitute in a virtual vessel for only arranging at a single tier, but is good also as setting out piled up in three dimensions to the given case section, the difficulty of prediction goes up in that case, and capture carries out and which has worth can be provided.

[0017]Like the invention according to claim 3, in the information service method according to claim 1, though the picture information seen from the given viewpoint is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information, it is good for it. Suppose that the step which changes a viewpoint is contained in the aforementioned suggestion step, and the picture information based on the viewpoint which changed [aforementioned] is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information at least in the information service method according to claim 3 like the invention according to claim 4 in this case.

[0018]According to invention of Claim 3 and four descriptions, while generating the same effect as Claim 1, the user can observe the arrangement situation of the information on a turn waiting state from various angles. Therefore, the information which comes out in the next can be expected and increase of the pleasure of the process in which what is called capture is carried out which measures the best purchase timing that obtains what is desired can be carried out further.

[0019]Like the invention according to claim 5, it is the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, and though the picture information for every stage concerned which expresses the details of offer turn gradually is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information, it is good for it.

[0020]While generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-4 they are according to the invention according to claim 5, When displaying the image used as suggestion information, the methods of presentation and the numbers of displays of a substitute, such as a capsule equivalent to the information and this information on a turn waiting state, are suitably changed according to the distance from a virtual vending machine to a viewpoint, and the display ability (for example, the size of a display screen, display color numbers, display-processing capability, etc.) of a user terminal.

[0021]If the whole virtual vending machine is displayed and also each substitutes of all are specifically displayed, for example although the display screen of a user terminal is small when 100 substitutes are arranged at the virtual vending machine, the color and graphics of a substitute portion will become muddy and appearance will worsen. Then, it is equipping the method of presentation with a stage, carrying out one expression per ten pieces in a whole display, and displaying one piece as one piece in an enlarged display, The wide original pleasure of an information service method of the present invention can be provided without impairing the appearance of graphics irrespective of the position of a viewpoint, and the throughput by the side of a terminal.

[0022]It is also possible to make two or more substitutes into the group of further some intentionally, and to enclose and display on one object as production using a substitute of an information service method, for example. For example, if a kind sets up abundant groups although it is an image of gray scale about the place where one color picture is usually enclosed with one object when it provides the default window using a character, joy like the inexpensive pack of a supermarket can be provided. or big TSUZURA of "being a sparrow with a tongue" -- small -- the black humor effect can also be added by carrying out setting out completely opposite to the data number which is guessed from suggestion information and which is enclosed like **** TSUZURA.

[0023]Like the invention according to claim 6, in the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, though the picture information displayed by the display style from which the

information on a turn waiting state differs according to the classification of information is contained in the aforementioned suggestion information, it is good for it.

[0024]While generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-5 they are according to the invention according to claim 6, the substitute equivalent to the information and this information on a turn waiting state, In the screen of suggestion information, according to the kind of information, and the contents of information, including for example, an image, a sound, music, a text, a program, etc., it has the different various characteristics, such as form and a foreground color, and is displayed, and a user's identification is helped. Specifically, if a substitute is made into the object of capsule state. For example, if it sees, the state where contents are known can be made from giving an indication with which it is enclosed, the small image, i.e., the icon, which are associated with the contents of data, or displaying an icon on the surface of an object into a translucent object. To a substitute, according to the availability of information, the characteristics, like classification by color, grant of an emblem, or luminance and a luminosity variation make it time can be set up, and collection nature can also be pushed forward. The characteristics of a substitute may be the actions (for example, vibration, rotation, etc.) in not only the surface characteristics but its form, or a screen.

[0025]In the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, like the invention according to claim 7, the aforementioned offer-of-information step, It is good, though it is characterized by being a step which transmits at least one of the information which controls the function concerned when the image, sound effect, and user terminal expressing information being provided are provided with a somesthesia function.

[0026]According to the invention according to claim 7, while generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-6 they are, when information is provided from an information processing system, information, including an animation, a sound effect, etc., is added as a production element which delights a purchase step with a user terminal more.

[0027]If it is a case where an offer of information is carried out specific for example, by setting out which purchases a capsule type substitute from a virtual vending machine, The information for displaying the animation in which a purchase lever and a button are operated at the time of purchase, The information for displaying the animation in which a capsule is discharged from the discharge port of a virtual vending machine, Additional transmission of the information for displaying the animation in which a capsule carries out a frame-in from the screen upper part, the information for displaying the animation in which a capsule breaks, the information for displaying the animation in which an icon jumps out of inside, the information on the sound effect attached to each animation, etc. is carried out. The user can enjoy the conventional not acquisition but sensibility incurred from the vending machine that it got of businesslike information like download of the program from a network, by the information on such an added production element being reproduced on a user terminal.

[0028]In addition, vibration when the user terminal is equipped with the vibrator function etc., and the information which carries out a vibration generation when controllable is transmitted, for example, a lever is turned, and the vibration at the time of a capsule being discharged can also be expressed.

[0029]since such a step has an effect which is kept waiting for a user and in which he is not bored when not only the purpose of the advice of receipt of information but transmission and reception take time, it is desirable to be set up suitably.

[0030]the invention according to claim 8 -- like -- the information service method **** according to any one of claims 1 to 7 -- though the change step (for example, steps S416-SS417 of [Fig.13](#)) which changes all or a part of offer turn concerning the information on a turn waiting state is contained in the aforementioned suggestion step, it is good for it.

[0031]According to the invention according to claim 8, while generating the same effect with any of Claims 1-7 they are, the change step which changes the offer turn of a substitute into the aforementioned suggestion step can be provided, and anticipation can be made complicated more by

performing at random according to a user's demand.

[0032]The invention according to claim 9 is characterized by the aforementioned change step being a step which changes the offer turn of the information on a turn waiting state based on the aforementioned offer turn for every offer of the information by the aforementioned offer-of-information step in the information service method according to claim 8.

[0033]According to the invention according to claim 9, while generating the same effect as Claim 8, a part of offer turn is changed into the degree of an offer of information. For example, when a user purchases the substitute of information from a virtual vending machine, a substitute is discharged from a discharge port and a change of turn is made at the time of one inner substitute decreasing in number. If a substitute is more specifically discharged from the bottom of a case, for example when a substitute is piled up and arranged in the given case of a virtual vending machine, space of the part will produce and a heap of substitutes will collapse. An information processing system changes a part of the arrangement for the collapse based on a three-dimensional simulation or a given relation. And a layout modification result is reflected in subsequent suggestion information.

Therefore, I can raise the virtual reality of a virtual vending machine more effectively, and can have you enjoy myself by a user by including the indefinite element from which arrangement changes.

[0034]Like the invention according to claim 10, in the information service method according to claim 8 or 9, the aforementioned change step is good also considering changing all or a part of turn of the aforementioned offer turn as characteristics, when a change request is received from a user terminal.

[0035]While generating the same effect with Claim 8 or any of 9 they are according to the invention according to claim 10, the user can make offer turn change by transmitting a given change request, when suggestion information comes to hand, offer turn is checked and it is never pleasing.

[0036]Specifically, for example the change request from a user, If operation [virtual vending machine] of "shaking", "turning", and "stirring" is prepared and an information processing system receives which change request, the information for displaying the animation in which offer turn is changed into on the scale according to a kind of operation, and operation is shown will be transmitted. A virtual vending machine is shaken, it turns and the animation stirred is expressed as the screen of a user terminal. And change of offer turn is reflected in subsequent suggestion information.

[0037]If it "stirring" "extortion" [which will be repeatedly operated continuously in order of the upper and lower sides if it becomes] Becomes, the input method in a user terminal, for example, the order of the upper lower right left -- circumference **** -- a given operation key is set to condition of carrying out operation [like] at order which is associated with each operation, if it becomes, Sensibility as if it was carrying out action to the virtual vending machine in a user terminal display screen can be given to a user.

[0038]However, by neither a simulation nor generating of a random number, he makes a change of arrangement by a change step with a given relation, and it is necessarily changed into the offer turn which a user desires. If setting out of it being discovered by the fictitious janitor by given establishment, and receiving punishments, such as partial confiscation of game mediums, here, if a change step is required is provided, it may be "dreadful [punishment]" "useless resistance to" a user -- "-- even when -- it may change to good geometry -- " -- the pleasure similar to the feeling of the mischievous child who says can also be given.

[0039]The invention according to claim 11 uses given game mediums (for example, virtual coin 50 of Fig.2) as the aforementioned price in the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 10.

[0040]the invention according to claim 11 -- getting twisted -- while generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-10 they are, a user receives offer of information using game mediums. Game mediums are required items on a rule, in order to receive an offer of information, for example, they are the virtual virtual coin on a game or a site besides a medal, coin, and a bill, a virtual bill, or a

point. Game mediums are better than an information processing system, and though they are issued in exchange for a charge using publicly known charge systems (for example, a credit card system, the toll collection system of a cellular phone company, etc.) at a given rate, they are good. [of given quantity *****] And in the case of purchase, the redemption of a simple electronic charge and not the offer of information of exchange but a feeling of actual existence which purchases goods can be brought about by, for example, passing through a step, such as putting virtual coin into the coin slot of a virtual vending machine.

[0041]In the information service method according to claim 11 like the invention according to claim 12, The registration information reception step (for example, steps S104-S201 of Fig.11) which receives user's registration information from a user terminal, The recording step (from Step S203 of Fig.11 to S208 [for example,]) which registers and manages a user or a user terminal as a registered user or a registered user terminal according to the you sir registration information which received [aforementioned], It is good though the quota step (for example, steps S209-S211 of Fig.11) which assigns the game mediums of given quantity cumulatively for every given time interval is included to a registered user or a registered user terminal.

[0042]According to the invention according to claim 12, while generating the same effect as Claim 11, game mediums are provided for every given time to the user or user terminal into which the information processing system was registered. Specifically, if three virtual coin per day assigns in exchange for a predetermined charge per month, a limit will be provided by the using frequency per day and minors' excessive use can be restricted previously, for example.

[0043]If it assigns by placing a given time interval, for example when an information processing system receives a providing request from a user terminal, and assigning one game mediums at a time, access of a user terminal is controllable. Therefore, in order that 100 users may use one set of a virtual vending machine for the next from the next, suggestion information can change quickly and the situation where pleasure of the present invention which predicts the purchase timing of information needed thoroughly is inhibited can be prevented.

[0044]The invention according to claim 13 is the information service method according to claim 12, and to the aforementioned quota step, When the game mediums of the given amount of above are assigned, the step which judges whether a maximum is exceeded or not is contained, and when judged with not exceeding a maximum, it is characterized by being a step which assigns the game mediums of the given amount of above.

[0045]According to the invention according to claim 13, while generating the same effect as Claim 12, a maximum is provided to the game mediums which can hold a user or a registered user terminal. If three virtual coin per day is supplied to a registered user, the possession maximum is specifically set to ten sheets, for example and it will not use four days or more, the coin rationed with much trouble will become useless. Therefore, brisk use can be demanded from a user.

[0046]The invention according to claim 14 equips the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 13 with the following.

A step which receives announcement conditions transmitted from a user terminal (for example, step S700 of Fig.12).

A step which judges whether offer turn concerning information on a turn waiting state satisfies the aforementioned announcement conditions (for example, step S700 of Fig.12).

A step which transmits information to that effect to a user terminal which transmitted the announcement conditions concerned when it judges with satisfying the aforementioned announcement conditions by the aforementioned judgment (for example, step S700 of Fig.12).

[0047]according to the invention according to claim 14, while generating the same effect as any one of the Claims 1-13, it has an "information mail" function in which a user informs a user of the situation of turn waiting of information needed.

[0048]Specifically, when information is provided with the virtual vending machine in a screen,

information surely needed is in a certain virtual vending machine, and the information presupposes that it gets if it purchases after 5 more times, for example. A user sets up the case where purchase is made 4 times from the target virtual vending machine and the target virtual vending machine as announcement conditions. Then, an information processing system will transmit mail to that effect to a user terminal, if announcement conditions are fulfilled. Therefore, while preventing excessive use which accesses a website all day long for information needed, even if it is a businessman busy with work, the present invention can be enjoyed sufficiently. As other registration conditions, the remaining number of the information in a virtual vending machine, the existence of new installation of a virtual vending machine, the existence of a supplement of new information, etc. can be set up suitably, for example.

[0049]In any of Claims 1-14, or the information service method of one description the invention according to claim 15, The user terminal which transmitted the providing request received by the aforementioned demand receiving step, The step which matches and memorizes the number of times of receiving a providing request, within a given period, Including the step which judges whether the information on a turn waiting state is transmitted to the user terminal which transmitted the aforementioned providing request based on the number of times of aforementioned receiving, the aforementioned offer-of-information step, When judged with transmitting by the aforementioned judgment, it is characterized by being a step which transmits the information on a turn waiting state.

[0050]According to the invention according to claim 15, while generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-14 they are, the maximum of the number of times of an offer of information which can be used per time to a user terminal is set up. Healthy use can be guaranteed by applying restriction previously to excessive use of minority, the short-time continuous use which makes full use of its own program, etc. by setting up-like, for example besides an ingredient, if it can use to 5 times per day.

[0051]The step which acquires the position information on a user terminal in the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 15 according to the invention according to claim 16, Or the step corresponding to the position to which the contents of the information which the aforementioned offer-of-information step provides according to this position information including either at least of the step which acquires the position information on an information processing system are changed is included.

[0052]According to the invention according to claim 16, a kind is given to the information provided according to the position of a user terminal or an information processing system while generating the same effect as any of Claims 1-15 they are. Specifically, a user terminal transmits the geographical position information on utilization time, or altitude information using a GPS function, the publicly known location information service put in practical use by PHS etc., etc., for example. If it is an information processing system, or it will acquire position information using the same function as a user terminal, for example, the number of stories of the address of a setting position, a building, etc. is memorized previously, and it is considered as position information. And it contains in the information which provides scenery, a building, a product, etc. in connection with this place, for example if it is a case where position information shows a tourist resort etc., and if it is a case where heights, such as a multi-story building, a mountain, and a peak, are shown, differentiation of providing the information which used the angel in connection with height as the motif can be performed. Therefore, a user can be provided with the pleasure which goes to various places and increases a collection.

[0053]The invention according to claim 17 contains the step which receives user's registration information from a user terminal, and the step which provides predetermined goods or service according to the user's registration information which received [aforementioned] in the information service method according to any one of claims 1 to 16.

[0054]According to the invention according to claim 17, while generating the same effect as any of

Claims 1-16 they are, as part of service concerning offer of information, the service of those other than information is carried out, and goods are offered.

[0055]The password equivalent to the exchange ticket which can acquire the whole series or a part of information provided collectively specifically to the information to provide, for example is given. And this password and user's registration information are received and a user is provided with information storage media, such as CD-ROM and MO which memorized information, memory card, and DVD, based on this registration information. Therefore, when there is much amount of information, compared with the case where it corresponds by communication, expense suppresses all the information few, and things are made, and offer of information can be performed also corresponding to the case where there is little information storage capacity of a user terminal. As the service provided separately or goods, in addition to this, it may be premiums, such as character goods and a stuffed animal, an entrance ticket to a meeting of a fan, etc., and may set up suitably, for example.

[0056]The information storage medium of the invention according to claim 20 memorizes the information acquisition program according to claim 19.

[0057]According to this invention according to claim 20, the information storage medium which generates the same effect as the invention according to claim 19 can be constituted.

[0058]

[Mode for carrying out the invention][First embodiment] With reference to Fig.1 - Fig.21, it describes about the first embodiment of the present invention hereafter. A first embodiment is an example in case a user uses a cellular phone as information terminal equipment (the following, user terminal) and receives offer of data by making the image of a virtual vending machine into a user interface between a user terminal and the server which can be communicated.

[0059][Description of composition] Fig.1 is a figure which describes the outline of the system by which the present invention is carried out. The server 200 which is an information providing device which provides data in a first embodiment as shown in the figure, The information processing system including the fee collection server 800 which collects the price of an offer of information is connected with the server 200 and the fee collection server 800, and the user terminal 600 that can transmit and receive data via the Internet 400 as an electric telecommunication line which is a medium of signal transduction from the user.

[0060]The server 200 is a publicly known general purpose computer or a personal computer, and CPU, An IC memory, an auxiliary storage unit, and CD or external storage reading equipment in which reading of external storage called MO is free, Input devices, such as a keyboard and a mouse, display devices, such as a display, and the communication apparatus for accessing the Internet 400 are connected via the system bath. It is always connected to the Internet 400 and the server 200 has a function as a WWW server. And the server 200 stores site information, a program to provide, data, etc. concerning the website for data offer in the present invention, and exhibits a Web page etc. on the Internet 400 based on site information. The server 200 transmits document data, picture data, music data, etc. which constitute a Web page to the information terminal equipment 600 accessed to this site, i.e., a user terminal. The user terminal 600 displays the screen based on the received data, and makes a user peruse a Web page.

[0061]Fig.2 is an outline view showing an example of the user terminal 600. The control device (not shown) which the user terminal 600 becomes from CPU, an IC memory, etc. as shown in the figure, Input devices, such as the manual operation buttons 642, such as a number, the cross operation keys 644, and the softkey 646, display devices, such as small LCD display 66, the radio equipment 68 that performs a wireless communication, etc. are the publicly known cellular phones connected via a system bath. The user terminal 600 is accessed to the website currently exhibited not only the function as a radiotelephone but on the Internet 400, By having an Internet function which can peruse a Web page and executing further the given program which was downloaded from the website and which was programmed or built in, It is possible to add and realize various functions, such as

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reproduction of voice data or picture image data and a game play. The information for displaying the image of the virtual vending machine which is a user interface in this embodiment can also be acquired by access to a website.

[0062]In the example of Fig.2 (a), an example of the virtual vending machine 10 which is a user interface in this embodiment is displayed on the display device 66. The virtual vending machine 10 is setting out which sells the capsule C which enclosed contents. First, a user accesses a website and gets the virtual coin 50 through a given charge system. And if the capsule C is purchased with the virtual vending machine 10 using the virtual coin 50, the contents (for example, various data, such as an image, a sound, music, a text, and a game program) corresponding to each capsule C are transmitted to the user terminal 600, and it can obtain. Fig.2 (b) is an example which makes the transmitted contents the default window of the cellular phone. The user terminal 600 may be not only a cellular phone but PHS and PDA provided with the same function, a personal computer, a game machine, etc.

[0063]The fee collection server 800 has the function to manage pulling down from billing to a user, a user's bank account, etc. By the present, various forms are put in practical use by the credit company and the communications service company of the user terminal 600, and a detailed description here will be omitted, for example. The fee collection server 800 may be provided in the server 200, and it may realize, without passing the Internet 400.

[0064][Description of a functional block] Next, it describes about the functional block which realizes this embodiment. Fig.3 is a functional block diagram of this embodiment. This embodiment is provided with the server 200 which holds the contents to provide and exhibits the website for an offer of information, the Internet 400, the user terminal 600 which acquires information, and the fee collection server 800.

[0065]The server 200 has the processing part 220, the storage part 240, and the contents database (following, contents DB) 290.

[0066]The processing part 220 performs various data processing and program manipulation in an offer of information. Web server part 222 in which especially the processing part 220 bears the function as a WWW server, The vending machine Management Department 224 which performs various data management about the virtual vending machine 10, The user management part 226 which manages the information of the user who receives data offer in the present invention, The accounting management department 228 which communicates with the fee collection server 800 using publicly known communication, and collects the price of data offer from a user, It has the image generation part 229 which builds the virtual vending machine 10 in virtual space, and generates the image from a given viewpoint, and hardwares, such as CPU, DSP, ASIC, and various IC memories, are realized.

[0067]Web server part 222 is specifically realized by the website program 242 of the storage part 240, Based on the site information 252, various data of the information on a menu screen, the picture information of the virtual vending machine 10, etc. is transmitted and received between the user terminals 600 which exhibited the website and have accessed it on the Internet 400, for example.

[0068]The vending machine Management Department 224 is realized by the vending machine control program 244 of the storage part 240, The vending machine management table 254, the capsule management table 255, and the contents management table 259 are used, Management of the virtual vending machine 10 provided on the website is managed, for example, arrangement of the capsule C for every vending machine, remaining number change of the capsule C accompanying purchase, use restrictions, a supplement of the capsule C, etc. are managed. More specifically the vending machine management table 254, As shown in Fig.4, the position information on vending machine ID, design ID of a vending machine, the series name of the goods (data) to sell and ID of the capsule management table 255, the total (remaining number) of a capsule, a user limit count, the number of users, and a vending machine, etc. are set up every virtual vending machine 10. Design ID of a vending machine

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specifies the color and form at the time of carrying out a screen display to the user terminal 600, and the vending machine design data 264 corresponding to ID is memorized in the storage part 240. The vending machine design data 264 is data of the polygon which forms a vending machine, texture data, or a bit map, for example.

[0069]As the capsule management table 255 is prepared for every virtual vending machine and it is shown in Fig.5. Capsule ID for identifying the capsule C individually, the content ID which matches the contents enclosed with the capsule C, and the position information on the capsule C in the virtual vending machine 10 (for example, mere consecutive numbers and a three-dimensional coordinate value may be used) are set up. if the virtual vending machine 10 is supplemented with the capsule C, data will newly be set to the capsule management table 255 at every capsule C -- a user -- taking out (it purchases) -- the data of the applicable capsule C is deleted from a table. or the capsule C -- existence may be set up by each Flagg operation.

[0070]Fig.8 is an example which shows the structure of the contents management table 259. As shown in the figure, the contents management table 259, For example, the content ID for identifying the contents data itself, ID of the icon which writes the contents of each contents small, and the name of contents, The Type of the data of an image, an audio program, etc., and the incidence of the contents at the time of filling up the capsule C, The bonus given to contents as a right that the display characteristics of the capsule C, the point size which can receive given data and service because it is given to contents and a user stores, special service, etc. can be received is set up. When the virtual vending machine 10 is supplemented with the capsule C, with reference to the contents management table 259, the capsule C is assigned and (enclosure) used based on the incidence for every contents. Here, as display characteristics of the capsule C, it is an icon etc. which make a texture, the pattern of a luminance change, and the contents of contents imagine, and the capsule design data 265 of the storage part 240 memorizes, for example.

[0071]The user management part 226 is realized by the user control program 246 memorized by the storage part 240, When processing of registration and change of the user's information using a website and the announcement conditions which the user set up are reached, Processing etc. of the user service (henceforth, information mail) which distributes the mail which tells that are given to a user as the user management table 256 using the information mail administration table 257.

[0072]Specifically, the user management table 256 is provided with the user name for user ID, user ID, a password, the mail address for data communications, and utilization history information as shown in Fig.6. As utilization history information, the number of virtual coin to own, the newest use time, the using frequency of the day, the number of acquired points, etc. are memorized, for example. The number of possession coin prevents that collect virtual coin recklessly and a lot of buyout acts are performed at once. Specifically, it is made not to perform issuance which is compared with given upper limit and exceeds upper limit at the time of issuance of virtual coin. It prevents that minors etc. use frequently by memorizing the using frequency of the day and providing upper limit frequency. In addition, a storage item may be chosen and added suitably. The number of acquired points is a given point given to the capsule C, and if this is stored, according to a point size, special service can receive it. Or it can use the special virtual vending machine 10 exchangeable for a point and special contents, for example as a service content, it may set up suitably receiving service and offer of goods separately through predetermined application procedures etc.

[0073]The information mail administration table 257 has memorized various announcement conditions which the user for making information mail send set up, as shown in Fig.7. A notice when there are user ID, vending machine ID made into the determination object of a notification condition, a remaining number of the capsule of the vending machine concerned, the number of discharge capsules after the time of an application, and a supplement as announcement conditions, for example, or the notice at the time of installation of a new vending machine is mentioned.

[0074]The accounting management program 248 of the storage part 240 realizes, and the accounting

management department 228 collects a price from a user via a network using the publicly known fee collection server 800. And if a price is collected in forms, such as a price per virtual coin, or a utilization charge price per monthly amount, the user management part 226 will supply a user virtual coin.

[0075]The storage part 240 stores various kinds of programs and data required for data offer, and is realized by information storage media, such as CD-ROM, an IC card, a hard disk, MO, DVD, and an IC memory.

[0076]The effect data 266 is contained in the storage part 240. there are a sound effect at the time of opening of information and the capsule C which the effect data 266 is [opening] data aiming at the effect production for having you enjoy purchase more at various steps, for example, operates the sound effect at the time of lever handling and the vibration function of the user terminal 600, music, etc. In addition, the image etc. of the character which appears in "extortion" operation etc. may be included here, and may be set up suitably.

[0077]Contents DB290 is realizable by hardwares, such as a hard disk which stored the data of the contents with which a user is provided by the present invention, for example, was provided with the RAID function, an IC memory, CD-ROM, MO, and DVD. As contents, for example The default window data of the user terminal 600, Voice data, such as the image data and calling sound which can be attached to e-mail, and a system sound, Various forms, such as a given game program and a password to which it awaits, and I can access the program of a clock etc. and a given site, or have special mail distributed, can be considered, and an information provider manufactures and sets up suitably.

[0078]The data in the contents DB290 is memorized as a set with the icon which makes the contents of the data (for example, the default window of the user terminal 600, music data, a video data, etc.) equivalent to a contents body, and the data concerned imagine, and content ID is attached to each. Using the contents DB control program 249, the processing part 220 reads data suitably, and transmits and provides at a user. Updating of data, etc. are performed if needed.

[0079]The user terminal 600 is provided with the following.

It is a publicly known multifunctional radio telephone equipment which has a function as information terminal equipment, and is the browser section 620.

Input part 640.

Display part 660.

The browser section 620 accesses the website on the Internet 400, It has a data-transmission-and-reception function realized by the exclusive application software by a publicly known WWW inspection function, JAVA (R), etc. which can peruse a website based on the data transmitted by the server 200. The browser section 620 is realized by performing software built in on hardwares, such as CPU, DSP and ASIC which are built in the user terminal 600, and an IC memory. Various functions, such as a game, can also be added and performed by similarly executing the given program downloaded from the Internet 400 via the browser section 620. The manual operation button 642 and input devices, such as the cross operation keys 644, realize, and the input part 640 can realize the display part 660 with display devices, such as small LCD display 66.

[0080][Description of a virtual vending machine] Next, with reference to Fig.9 - Fig.10, details are described about the capsule C which is the vision target of sale in this embodiment, and the virtual vending machine 10 which is the vending machine. Fig.9 is a figure showing the example of the appearance of the capsule C sold with the virtual vending machine 10. The capsule C said here is a substitute of the information provided, and it consists of a 3D object which imitated the capsule of the approximate sphere form. The capsule C sold with the one virtual vending machine 10 is the same size altogether, and is setting out by which various kinds of contents equivalent to specific goods are enclosed with inside.

[0081]The image data of KOBUTA which can be attached to the default window of the user terminal 600, or mail as contents, for example, voice data, such as a calling sound and a system sound, and a

given game — it awaits, and a clock etc., [and] Various forms, such as a password which can access a given site, a password to which I have special mail distributed, or ticket data which can receive service and offer of goods separately by predetermined application, can be considered. It is performed by the vending machine Management Department 224 based on setting out of the contents management table 259 of the storage part 240 which contents are enclosed with which capsule C, when the virtual vending machine 10 is supplemented with the capsule C. If a data donor sets up the incidence of the contents management table 259 suitably, it will become possible here to give the difficulty of rare of entering, i.e., the degree, at contents to a hand. Therefore, I can have the pleasure and volition I get a user to purchase more have by giving given collection nature to contents.

[0082]The capsule C is provided with the display properties according to each contents enclosed. Fig.9 is a figure showing the example of various forms. For example, Fig.9 (a) is in the state where the icon of contents was displayed, and a user tends to identify desired contents. If the pleasure which is not understood what comes out is emphasized, the display pattern according to the degree of rare of contents may be performed. For example, Fig.9 (b) is the contents equivalent to an item with a privilege, and the asterisk is in it. On the other hand, Fig.9 (c) is contents with a high application rate, and is displayed by simple two-tone coloring. The display properties of such a capsule C are set up with the capsule management table 255 possible and providing every virtual vending machine 10 suitably, and are managed by the vending machine Management Department 224.

[0083]Fig.10 is a perspective view showing the appearance of the virtual vending machine 10 which sells the capsule C. As shown in Fig.10 (a), the virtual vending machine 10 is provided with the following.

The object placement part 11 which is a virtual vessel which displays suggestion information on offer turn concerning information on a turn waiting state on a user, and can arrange the capsule C of the aforementioned approximate sphere type in random order, and can observe a situation of arrangement of the capsule C from outside.

The object discharge part 12 which is surrounded by opaque part, is arranged at the lower part of the object placement part 11, and chooses the capsule C sequentially from the bottom and discharges it so that arrangement appearance of the capsule C cannot be easily observed from outside.

The surface (any erection surface used as the surface as equipment) on the side front of the object discharge part 12 is equipped with the purchase lever 13 which performs discharge of the capsule C, the discharge port 14 of the capsule C, and the coin slot 15 of virtual coin.

[0084]The capsule C is arranged in in the object placement part 11 by random order as a 3D object which has a given size as mentioned above as shown in Fig.10 (b), and position information is memorized as each coordinate value of XYZ with the capsule management table 255. If a user does operation which determines purchase from the user terminal 600, through the event which operates the purchase lever 13, a capsule will be chosen sequentially from the bottom of the object discharge part 12, and it will be discharged from the discharge port 14. The stirring rod 16 which stirs the capsule C in the object placement part 11 may be provided, and an opportunity for a user to change arrangement of the capsule C may be provided. [0085]In the server 200, such a virtual vending machine 10 is built as an object in three-dimensional virtual space, The state of vending machines, such as a position of a vending machine, a kind of capsule to sell, display properties, and a remaining number of a capsule, is memorized with the vending machine management table 254, and is managed by the vending machine Management Department 224.

[0086]The publicly known capsule selling device which sells the toy etc. which have been arranged around from the 1960s at shop fronts, such as a store, and were enclosed with the capsule in the coins of the small sum to the child in the appearance feature of the virtual vending machine 10 is made to have imagined especially in this embodiment. thus, an intentionally publicly known selling

device -- **** -- by things, while a user can enjoy himself immediately, without needing the description of directions for use, for example by using the retro design of the 1960s, a retrospective idea can be added and it can provide for a user.

[0087][Description of processing of an offer of information] Next, with reference to figures, it describes about flowing into processing of the information service method in this embodiment. Fig.11 - Fig.14 are the flow charts showing the flow of processing of an offer of information, and Fig.15 - Fig.21 are examples of the screen displayed during processing of an offer of information by the cellular phone which is the user terminal 600.

[0088]Fig.11 is a flow chart showing the flow of processing from access to a website to reception and registration of a user's registration information. According to Fig.11, in order to purchase data from the virtual vending machine 10, the user terminal 600 accesses first the website in which the virtual vending machine 10 is installed using the Internet inspection function (Step S100). The server 200 transmits the information for an HTML file required for a Web page display, picture information, and animation display, etc. (Step S101). Subsequently, [whether it registers as a user and fixed amount use of the offer of information of this embodiment is carried out, and] Or the information which carries out a screen display of the input column etc. of the text to which the input request of the utilization condition of whether to use by a subordinate charge system as a trial is urged, the button which makes selection of a utilization condition, and user's registration information, including for example, a user name, a password, etc., is transmitted (Step S103).

[0089]In the user terminal 600, a Web page is displayed (Step S102) and it is chosen whether fixed amount use is registered as a user and carried out or it uses as a trial. In user's registration, registration information is input and transmitted further (Step S104).

[0090]if the server 2 receives a utilization condition and registration information -- the case of trial use -- (YES of Step S201) -- the virtual coin of given number of sheets (here, it is to three sheets to 1 time of an accelerator) is issued by a charge system as it is (Step S211). In user's registration use, (NO of Step S201) and the user management table 256 are referred to, and if unregistered (YES of Step S203), password registration will be performed newly (Step S205). If the user name is registered (NO of Step S203), a password check will be performed and a password will not correspond, The information which displays the text and input column which stimulate reinput of a password is transmitted (NG of Step S207), and a password is reinputted by the user terminal 600 (Step S208).

[0091]If registration and the check of a password are completed next, the number of possession coin of the user management table 256 will be referred to. If the number of possession of game mediums (virtual coin) is not over upper limit (YES of Step S209), using a publicly known charge system, in exchange for a price, given number of sheets is newly issued and the user management table 256 is updated (Step S211). When it is over upper limit, (NO of Step S209) and new virtual coin are not issued.

[0092]Fig.12 is a flow chart showing the flow of subsequent menu screen operation in processing to reception and registration of a user's registration information in offer-of-information processing. According to the figure, if virtual coin is issued (Step S211), the server 2 will transmit the information on the number of sheets of virtual coin, and the menu screen of a Web page (Step S301).

[0093]Based on the information received from the server 200, virtual coin number of sheets and a menu screen are displayed on the user terminal 600 (Step S302). Fig.15 is an example of a menu screen. By scrolling a screen, it becomes selectable to a dashed line part. As shown in Fig.15, the shop front page in which the virtual vending machine 10 is installed in a menu screen, the description page of a way used with the application page of information mail and the exchange page of a point as the bulletin board page which publishes the installation information of a new vending machine, etc., and an end are selectable. In order to purchase the capsule C, a shop front page is chosen (YES of Step S306).

[0094]If the page which he wishes by the cross operation keys 644 etc. is chosen by the user terminal 600, the information which shows the selected page will be transmitted (Steps S304-S314). In the server 200, as shown in Fig.12, after various processing (Step S400, S500, S600, S700) concerning the selected page is performed and processing is completed, the information on a menu screen is transmitted again. The screen of the user terminal 600 returns to selection of a menu (Step S304). Since it is realizable by use of publicly known technology about bulletin board display processing (Step S500), the point message exchange (Step S600), and mail processing (Step S700), a description here is omitted.

[0095]Next, with reference to Fig.13, it describes specifically about the processing (Step S400) in a shop front page. The server 200 reception of the signal which chooses the shop front page from the user terminal 600 will carry out reading transmission of the shop front page screen information from the site information 252 of the storage part 240 (Step S401).

[0096]A shop front page is displayed on the user terminal 600 (Step S402). Fig.16 is a figure showing an example of a shop front page. Signs that two or more virtual vending machines 10 are located in a line are shown in the background that Fig.16 (a) imitated in front of the store [of the store], and the vending machine of middle of the screen has become a selection object for it. The series name of the contents of the vending machine used as a selection object is displayed on the upper part of a screen. Fig.16 (b) is a case of a text display. The user terminal 600 will return to a menu screen here, if "it returns" is chosen by the softkey 646 (YES of Step S404). If the vending machine of a selection object is changed by right-and-left operation of the cross operation keys 644 and selection decision is carried out by the softkey 646, vending machine ID of the selected virtual vending machine 10 will be transmitted (NO->S406 of Step S404).

[0097]If the server 200 receives the selection signal (for example, ID of a vending machine) of a vending machine, he will generate the image which shows the appearance of the virtual vending machine 10 for the vending machine management table 254 applicable from the storage part 240 by reading (Step S407) and the processing part 220, and will transmit (Step S409). In the user terminal 600, as shown in Fig.17, the image which shows the appearance of the virtual vending machine 10 as suggestion information is displayed (Step S410). A user observes the row of the capsule C arranged in a vending machine by this image, checks arrangement of the capsule containing data [want / one], and predicts the timing to purchase. If the viewpoint change request of a reduced display will be transmitted if "1" of the manual operation button 642 of the user terminal 600 is pushed and an enlarged display and "2" will be pushed here, for example, and which direction of the cross operation keys 644 is pushed, A viewpoint change request to which a viewpoint is rotated is transmitted in the pushed direction (Step S412).

[0098]If the server 200 receives the signal of viewpoint change, calculations which change the viewpoint in virtual space are performed (Step S413), and the processing part 220 will generate the image after change, and will transmit (Step S409). The image by which a viewpoint change was made is displayed on the user terminal 600 (Step S410). A user looks into the virtual vending machine 10 from various angles as it wishes, and he predicts the timing to which the desired capsule C comes out.

[0099]When the arrangement of the present capsule C is not pleasing, what "is stirred" can surely do the virtual vending machine 10. ["extortion" and] These are equivalent to a change step. For example, "extortion" is swaying a vending machine up and down, and is an act which changes the overlapping state of the capsule C piled to the object placement part 11. "Extortion" demand will be sent if key operation of the "extortion" from whom the cross operation keys 644 repeat and push the upper and lower sides into a given time interval by the user terminal 600 is carried out (Step S416). If the server 200 receives the requirement signal of "extortion", by generating a random number, changing the arrangement of the capsule C partially, and changing the capsule management table 255, he will generate the image in (Step S417) and the state where it changed, and will transmit (Step S409). On the occasion of image generation here, by a given timer count, When a

given time interval shall be placed, an image shall be generated and a many user uses the same virtual vending machine 10, it prevents inhibiting the pleasure of the present invention with which arrangement (suggestion information) of the capsule C changes quickly, and predicts the purchase timing of information needed to be thoroughly. The counted value of a timer may be suitably set up according to an access number.

[0100]Here, the pleasure to purchase can also be directed, if the image of the virtual vending machine 10 changed by the user terminal 600 faces being displayed, inserts animation first and differentiates it from operation of change of a viewpoint. For example, Fig.18 is an example of an animation screen. A given character appears and the virtual vending machine 10 is shaken. In "stirring", the stirring rod 16 in the virtual vending machine 10 rotates, it is considered as setting out by which change of more nearly overall arrangement is made, and an animation screen as shown in Fig.19 may be inserted.

[0101]If a user finishes the observation before purchase and opts for purchase, a purchase request will be input by the softkey 646 of the user terminal 600 (YES of Step S418). In the display screen of the user terminal 600, given number of sheets is pulled from the remaining number display of virtual coin.

[0102]If the signal of purchase operation is received and it will become, the server 200 will compare with the maximum (for example, 5 times per day) of the using frequency of the day with reference to the user management table 256 (Step S419). When exceeding a use maximum, (YES of Step S419) and use restrictions are performed, The information, including a text or an icon, which transmits that it cannot use since the maximum of the using frequency on the 1st is exceeded is transmitted (Step S421), and an indication to that effect is given to the user terminal 600 (Step S422). When not exceeding a use maximum, image data required for the lever handling screen later mentioned by (NO of Step S419) and the processing part 220 is generated, and it is transmitted with sound effect data etc. (Step S423). When the user terminal 600 is equipped with the vibration function etc. and it can control by send data, the vibration information expressing vibration which turns a lever may be added to this. It is similarly referred to by the vending machine management table 254, and at the time of coin throwing, When exceeding a given user limit count because the selected virtual vending machine 10 is already used for other users and a user uses, similarly, use restrictions are performed and the information which displays that on the user terminal 600 is transmitted.

[0103]The enlarged drawing of the purchase lever 13 of the virtual vending machine 10 is displayed on the user terminal 600 as a lever handling screen (Step S424). Fig.20 is an example of a lever handling screen. For example within a given time interval here the cross operation keys 644 of the user terminal 600, The upper → right → if lever handling called pushing in order is carried out as the bottom called it → left, the image which a lever rotates with a sound effect on a screen will be displayed, and a providing request will be transmitted to the server 200 (Step S426).

[0104]The server 200 will choose the capsule C nearest to the object discharge part 12 from the capsule management table 255 as a candidate for discharge, if a providing request is received. The point given to the capsule C is added to the number of acquired points of the user management table 256 (Step S427). And by the processing part 220, the capsule opening image of the selected capsule C is generated, reading and applicable sound effect data read the assigned contents data and its icon from the effect data 266 from contents DB290, and it both transmits (Step S429).

[0105]If capsule opening image data, contents data, and its icon are received, while displaying the image of capsule opening, the icon of contents data will be displayed by the user terminal 600 (Step S430). Fig.21 is an example of a capsule opening image and the icon of contents data is sticking out of inside.

[0106]Here, a user peruses and reproduces the contents data which came to hand by the function with which the user terminal 600 is provided (Step S432). And the contents which came to hand are saved (Step S434). The saved data becomes usable suitably, for example like Fig.2 (b) at a default window etc. If preservation is completed, it will return to a shop front page screen again (Step

S406).

[0107]In the above, in the data communications in a cellular phone (user terminal 600), even if it is a case where data communications with a base station are interrupted by influence of certain ** on the way, data communications shall be resumed from from while [the] being interrupted.

[0108]Next, with reference to Fig.14, supplement processing of the capsule C to the virtual vending machine 10 is described. A supplement of the capsule C is performed with the server 200, after the capsule C discharged is determined and contents data is transmitted (Step S900 of Fig.13).

[0109]Fig.14 is a flow chart showing the details of the turn setting step by the server 200. As a turn setting step, the server's 200 vending machine Management Department 224 refers to the total and remaining number of the capsule C from the vending machine management table 254 (Step S901). It asks for the number which will fill up a remaining number from the capsule total and remaining number of the vending machine management table 254 if a supplement is necessary as compared with given supplement reference value (for example, three pieces) (YES of Step S903) (Step S905). And the capsule C of only the number of supplements for which the object placement part 11 was asked is arranged at random, and ID and position information are newly recorded on the capsule management table 255 (Step S907). And with reference to the contents management table 259, based on the incidence for every contents, assignment and the expression characteristic of contents are determined to the capsule C, and the capsule management table 255 is updated (Step S905). If a supplement is unnecessary (NO of Step S903), a supplement of the capsule C will be completed (Step S911).

[0110]As mentioned above, since purchase operation of the timing from which a user observes arrangement of the capsule C in the virtual vending machine 10, and can get the desired capsule C is expected and carried out, The establishment which can obtain the desired capsule C is changed by observation of a user's brisk suggestion information, reading of timing anticipation, fate, etc. Therefore, it is not an automatic vending machine in which the goods it was decided that pushed a button are provided, either, and the offer of information provided with the game nature which is not a sacred-oracle vending machine which is not completely understood what kind of goods are provided, either, or gamble nature can be carried out.

[0111]in addition -- the present invention is even limitation to the example carried out above -- ** -- **** -- of course, it can change suitably within limits which there are not and do not deviate from the meaning of the present invention

[0112]For example, in a first embodiment, the form of the virtual vending machine 10 and the configuration method of the capsule C may also manage the position and turn of the capsule C as two dimensions as a design possible change and superficial suitably. Although the image generation of the virtual vending machine 10 was delayed by a timer count only at the time of processing of "extortion" and "stirring", the same processing may be suitably set up between steps.

[0113]In order to prevent suggestion information changing for a short time using the virtual vending machine 10 with same many user, A predetermined time interval may be realized by Lycium chinense at the time of provision noting that it will provide one virtual coin at a time out of the coin which the server 200 holds, if there is nothing and the server 200 receives the purchase request from the user terminal 600 with regards to the number of virtual coin to hold.

[0114]In addition, although the server 200 generated the image of the virtual vending machine 10 and it transmitted to the user terminal 600, When the user terminal 600 is provided with suitable throughput, in the server 200, only position control of the capsule C may be performed, the position information and capsule ID information of the capsule C may be transmitted, and the user terminal 600 may generate an image. Under the present circumstances, the data for generating the virtual vending machine 10 may acquire the vending machine design data 264 from the server 200 in advance of use, or by the user terminal 600, with a refreshable information storage medium, may receive distribution and may also read it separately.

[0115]It is good though offer of service, actual goods, etc. are separately delivered by everything but

the offer of information which set up the ticket data equivalent to an exchange ticket as contents data, and passed the network by the publicly known application means.

[0116][Second embodiment] Next, it describes about a second embodiment using Fig.22 - Fig.23. About the same component as a first embodiment, the code of the same number shall be attached and a description shall be omitted.

[0117]The information service method of a second embodiment makes an example the case where a server is accessed, via the Internet using a personal computer as the user terminal 600. According to the second embodiment, it is setting out which gets the child D to carry information from the delivery shop 20 of the imagination which is equivalent to a virtual vessel (virtual vending machine 10) in a Web page. Fig.22 is a figure showing an example of the Web page displayed on a user terminal screen in a second embodiment. Like a first embodiment, a user accesses a given website and receives issuance of game mediums through user's registration. And if the virtual delivery shop 20 which delivers information needed is chosen, the delivery landscape surface of the delivery shop 20 which exists in a virtual world as shown in Fig.22 as suggestion information can be seen.

[0118]As shown in Fig.22, in the screen of delivery scenery, the event button 28 and ** which instruct the display part 22 of the series name of provided information, the order button 24 which instructs a purchase request, the virtual coin display part 26 which is game mediums, and the event generation of rearrangement are contained as an operating system element. The virtual delivery shop 20, the delivery car 30 which are delivery members, and a user picks up a child with a certain child D with the substitute of information, and goes to delivery, the toilet 32 which is event elements, etc. are included as an element of a suggestion information system. In the example of Fig.22, various contents, such as music about Christmas, a party invitation letter-oriented image, and a program of a party game, are provided.

[0119]The enlarged display of the child D is carried out, and whether the child D has what kind of goods, i.e., information, can acquire the image of more specific information, if the pointer 34 is applied and chosen. Fig.23 is a figure showing an example of the child's D enlarged drawing. The child D is holding the object E which displayed the icon of contents in the hand. The child D equips the head with the ornament F, for example, it is a KUWOTESHON mark, a star, etc., and suggests to a user that they are contents with low acquisition frequency, or that they are the contents added newly.

[0120]As one of the characteristics of this embodiment, there is event nature of the change step by having set up the virtual world. Since the children who appear in a Web page are not minerals substitutes, if it also sleeps, they may neglect work. By that is, the thing for which the event which goes to the toilet 32, and which becomes sleepy, like that it rains and a dog plunges into a sequence is set up as a change step, for example, and various events are carried out according to a user's operation or a random number, A locating position is changed by children leaving a sequence, or being flustered and a sequence being confused. Rearrangement by an event is reflected in suggestion information, and image display of the process in which the situation of the sequence of a user terminal changes is carried out by animation etc.

[0121]About flowing into a specific purchase, the virtual vending machine 10 in a first embodiment at the virtual delivery shop 20, Lever handling is realizable for the sequence of the turn waiting of the child D by arrangement of the capsule C to the object E which is holding the capsule C with the child D by the same processing by replacement of operation of the delivery vehicles 30 etc. However, since the animation of an event, etc. serve as the characteristics, separately, the data for animation is held in the storage part 240, or change of making the user terminal 600 process animation etc. is needed in this embodiment, for it.

[0122]Thus, on a Web page, supposing a virtual world, change of a locating position can be expressed in children's operation, and a user's use can be urged by adding seeing-event pleasure. The use as part of merchandising is attained by using given characters, such as anime, as a child's character. Suitably, the kind of event can be set up and may change the contents for every virtual

delivery shop or every season.

[0123]By as mentioned above, the thing for which the virtual vending machine 10 or a virtual world is set up as a turn setting step, and the information (load which the capsule C or a child carries) which is goods is provided in given turn, The contents of the information from which the goods it was always decided that chose the buy button regular like a publicly known automatic vending machine are not always provided, and a user is obtained by the timing of purchase differ. However, on the other hand, by a suggestion step, a user observes by an image by making the row of the capsule C in the virtual vending machine 10, and a child's sequence into suggestion information, and can predict offer turn to some extent. When there is information to surely get, and other users purchase information, the suggestion information which changes with time can be checked briskly, and probability coming to hand can be made high because the user himself predicts the timing of the purchase.

[0124]

[Effect of the Invention]According to the information service method by the present invention, a user, For example, "goods needed are located in a line" "the way things stand, The mental fluctuation by the speculative spirit and few competitive spirit of it being purchased by other someone when" and "however, I liking to get by little payment, without purchasing continuously until goods needed come out", and a sense of economy is experienced. A conventional automatic vending machine and sacred-oracle vending machine are the pleasure similar to different game feeling, and according to the information service method by the present invention, these can provide a user with new pleasure.

[Translation done.]

* NOTICES *

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- 1.This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.*** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1]It is a figure which describes the outline of the system by which the offer of information in a first embodiment is carried out.

[Drawing 2]It is a figure which is a user terminal in a first embodiment and in which showing the appearance of a cellular phone, and an example (a) indicates the state where the user interface was displayed to be, and (b) show an example which shows the utilizing state of the provided information.

[Drawing 3]It is a block diagram showing the functional block which constitutes a first embodiment.

[Drawing 4]It is a figure showing an example of the contents of the vending machine management table in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 5]It is a figure showing an example of the contents of the capsule management table in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 6]It is a figure showing an example of the contents of the user management table in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 7]It is a figure showing an example of the contents of the information mail administration table in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 8]It is a figure showing an example of the contents of the contents management table in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 9]In a first embodiment, it is a figure showing the example of the appearance of the capsule sold with a virtual vending machine.

[Drawing 10]It is a figure in a first embodiment showing an example of the appearance of a virtual vending machine. (a) shows the state where the capsule is [(b)] contained in the state where there is no capsule.

[Drawing 11]It is a flow chart showing the processing in a first embodiment, and the flow of processing from access to a website to reception and registration of a user's registration information is shown.

[Drawing 12]It is a flow chart in a first embodiment showing the flow of processing, and the flow of menu screen operation is shown.

[Drawing 13]It is a flow chart in a first embodiment showing the flow of processing, and the flow of the processing in a shop front page is shown.

[Drawing 14]It is a flow chart in a first embodiment showing the flow of processing, and the flow of supplement processing of the capsule to a virtual vending machine is shown.

[Drawing 15]It is a figure showing an example of the menu screen displayed on a user terminal in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 16]It is a figure showing an example of the shop front screen displayed on a user terminal in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 17]It is a figure showing an example of the screen at the time of the viewpoint change in a

first embodiment displayed on a user terminal.

[Drawing 18] It is a figure showing an example of the screen at the time of "extortion" selection in a first embodiment displayed on a user terminal.

[Drawing 19] It is a figure showing an example of the screen at the time of "stirring" selection in a first embodiment displayed on a user terminal.

[Drawing 20] It is a figure showing an example of the lever handling screen displayed on a user terminal in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 21] It is a figure showing an example of the screen where contents appear from the capsule displayed on a user terminal in a first embodiment.

[Drawing 22] It is a figure showing an example of the Web page displayed on a user terminal in a second embodiment.

[Drawing 23] It is a figure in a second embodiment showing an example of a child's appearance.

[Explanations of letters or numerals]

10 Virtual vending machine

20 Virtual delivery shop

50 Virtual coin

200 Server

220 Processing part

222 Web server part

224 Vending machine Management Department

226 User management part

228 Accounting management department

240 Storage part

242 Website program

244 Vending machine control program

246 User control program

248 Accounting management program

249 Contents DB control program

252 Site information

254 Vending machine management table

255 Capsule management table

256 User management table

257 Information mail administration table

259 Contents perception table

264 Vending machine design data

265 Capsule design data

266 Effect data

400 Internet

600 User terminal

800 Fee collection server

C Capsule

D Child

[Translation done.]

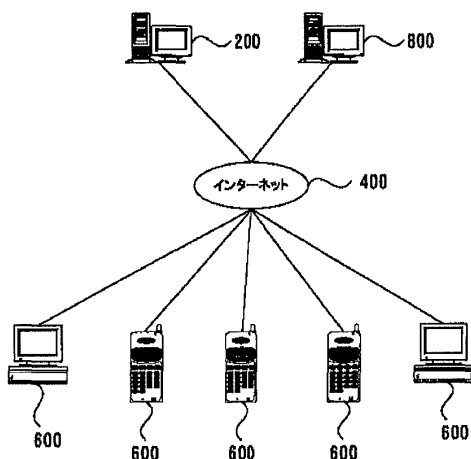
* NOTICES *

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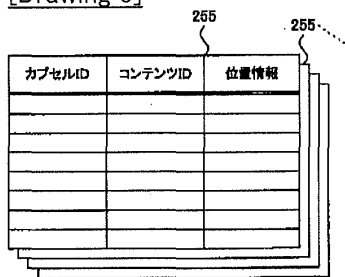
- 1.This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.*** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DRAWINGS

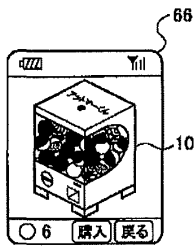
[Drawing 1]



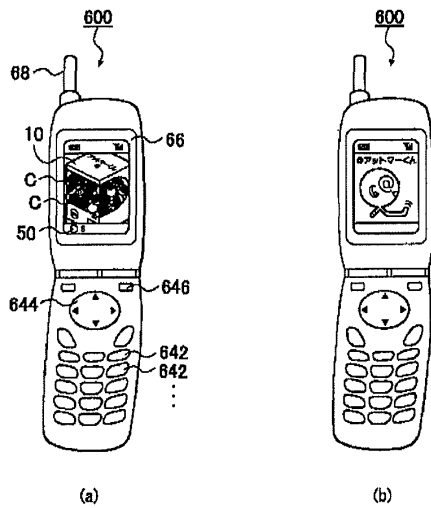
[Drawing 5]



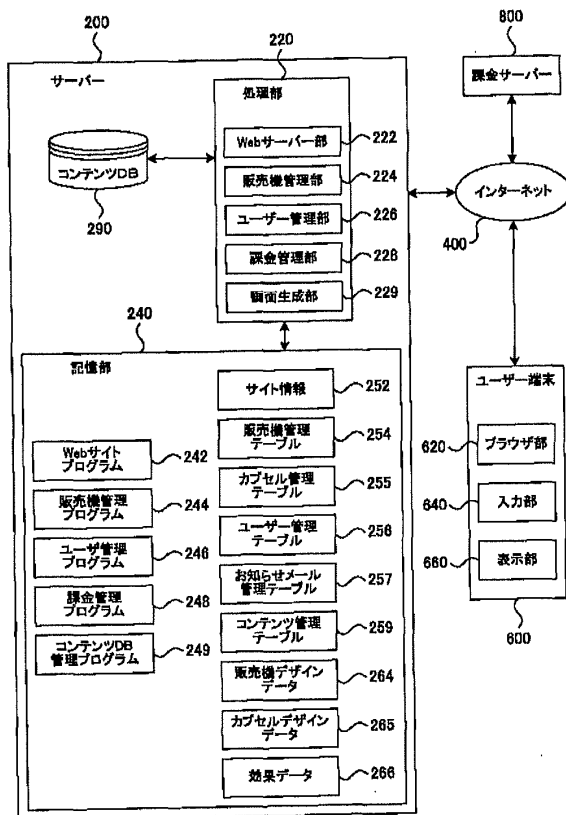
[Drawing 17]



[Drawing 2]



[Drawing 3]



[Drawing 4]

254

販売機ID	デザインID	商品シリーズ名	カプセル管理テーブルID	カプセル総数	カプセル残数	利用者数	利用者制限数	店頭での位置情報

[Drawing 6]

256

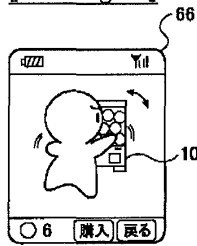
ユーザー情報				利用履歴情報			
ユーザー名	ユーザーID	パスワード	メールアドレス	所有コイン数	最新利用日時	1日の利用回数	獲得ポイント数

[Drawing 7]

257

ユーザID	通告条件				
	対象販売種ID	カプセル残数	カプセル録出数	補充	新規

[Drawing 18]

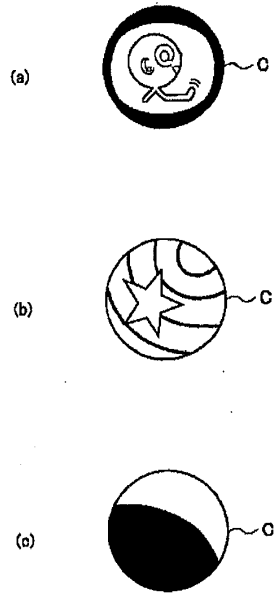


[Drawing 8]

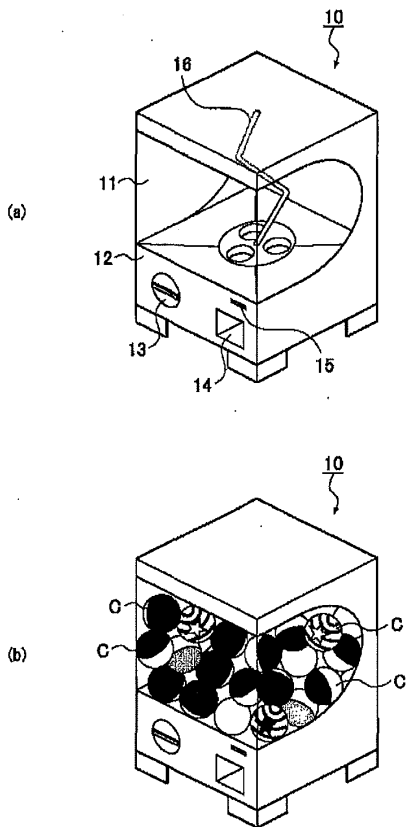
258

コンテンツID	アイコンID	コンテンツ名	表示特性	データ区分	出現率	ポイント数	ボーナス

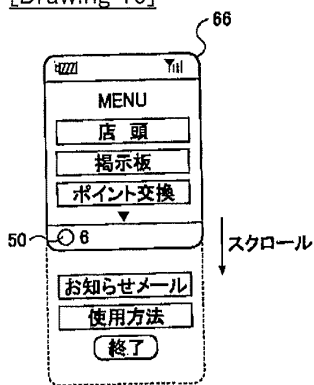
[Drawing 9]



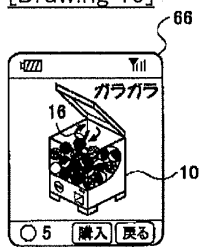
[Drawing 10]



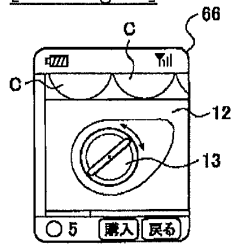
[Drawing 15]



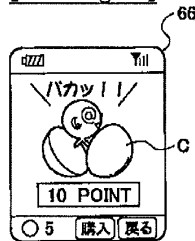
[Drawing 19]



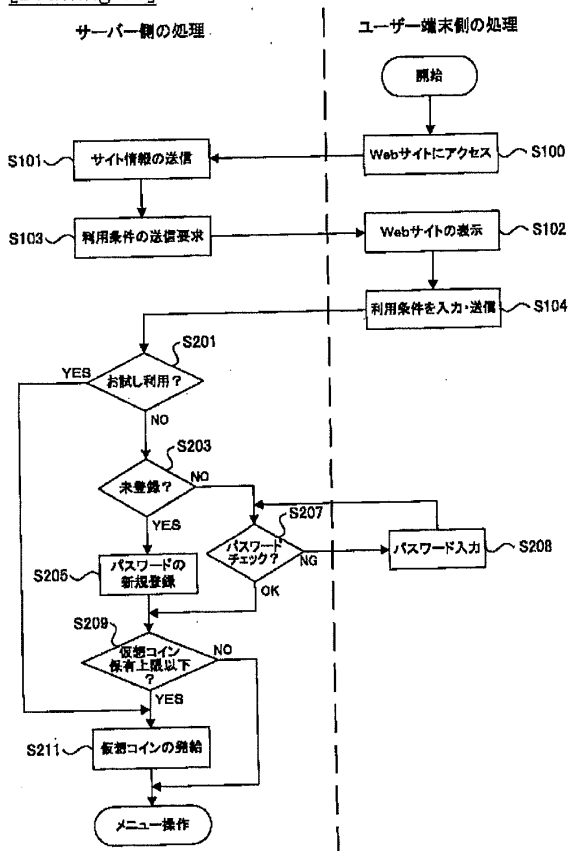
[Drawing 20]



[Drawing 21]

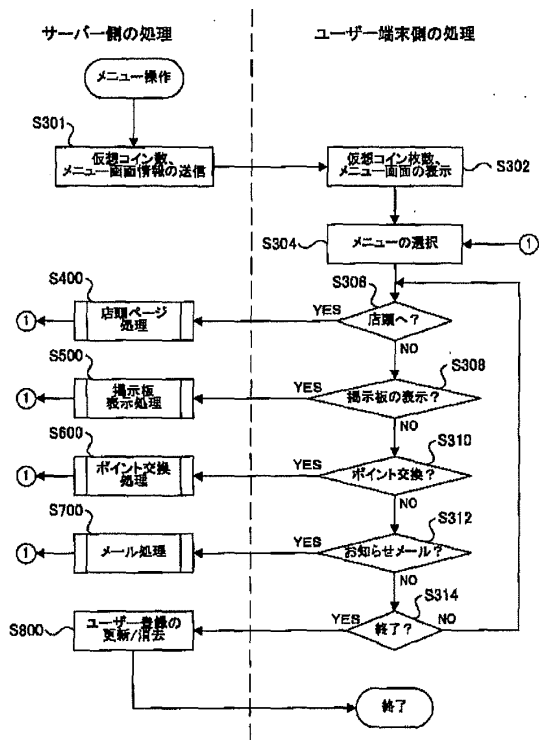


[Drawing 11]

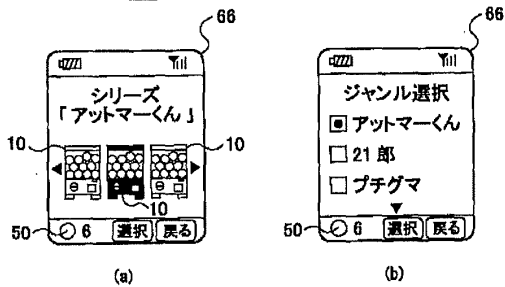


[Drawing 12]

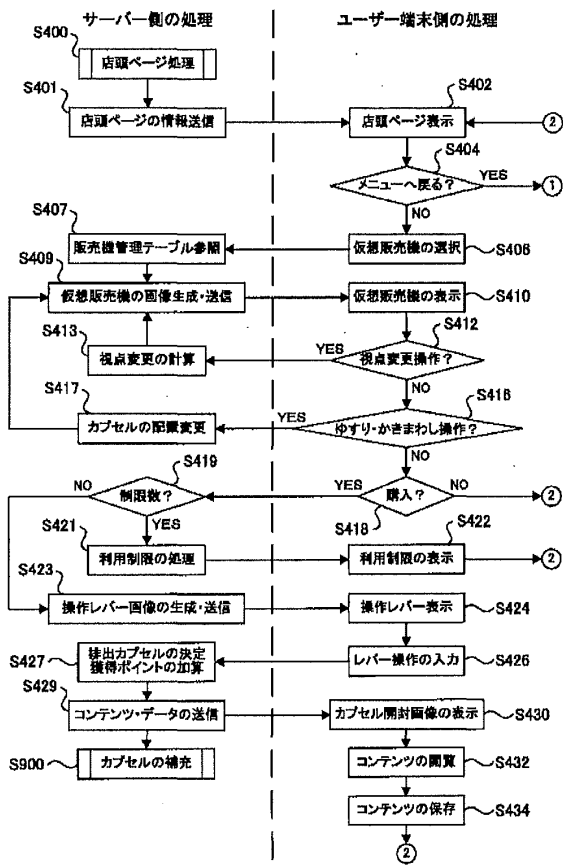
http://www4.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/cgi-bin/tran_web.cgi_ejje?atw_u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww4.ipd... 1/7/2015



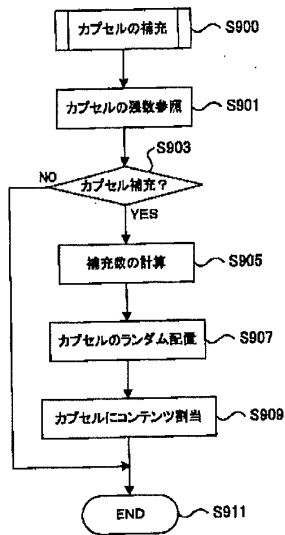
[Drawing 16]



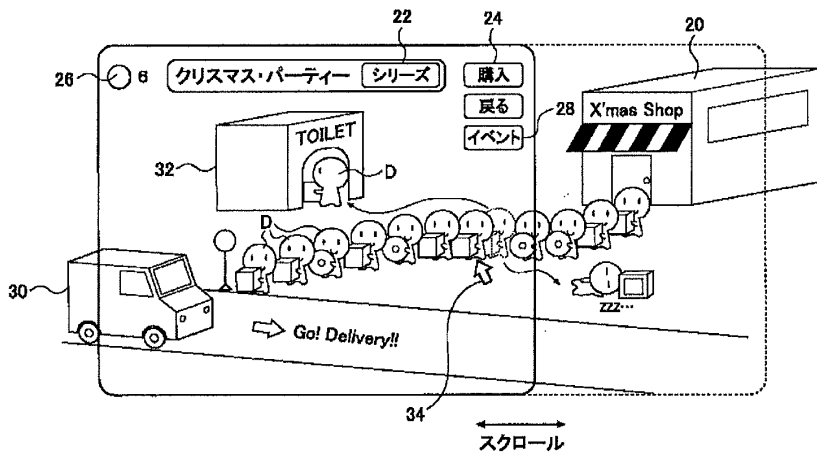
[Drawing 13]



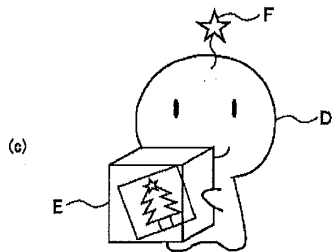
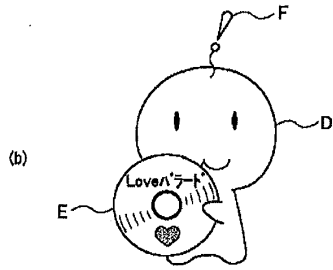
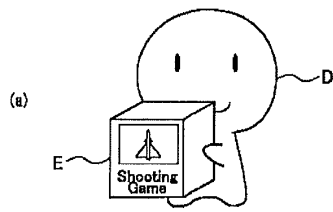
[Drawing 14]



[Drawing 22]



[Drawing 23]



[Translation done.]

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13/00		13/00	E

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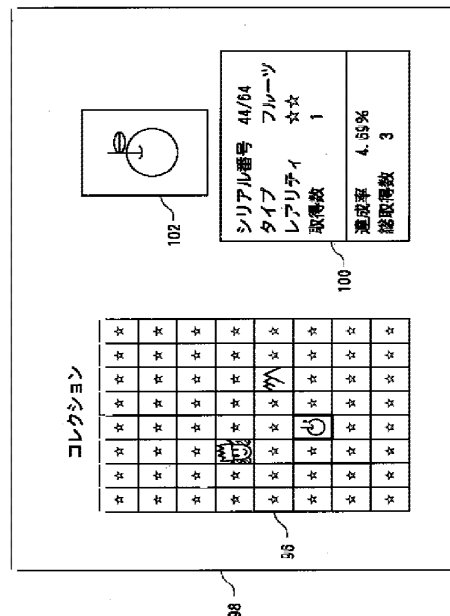
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(54) 【発明の名称】 ゲーム装置、ゲーム装置の制御方法及び情報記憶媒体

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 偶然的要素を含む簡単な第2ゲームを第1ゲームに付加することにより、第1ゲームのゲーム性を損なわず、ゲーム全体として飽きにくくでき、且つ第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高める。

【解決手段】 第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤにコレクションポイント (ドロポイント) を付与し、付与されるコレクションポイントを一旦記憶しておく。そして、第2ゲームにおいて、記憶されているコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤにコレクションアイテム (カード画像) を付与する。また、既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを所定タイミングで表示等により出力する。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 第1ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第1ゲーム提供手段と、
第2ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第2ゲーム提供手段と、
を含むゲーム装置において、
前記第1ゲーム提供手段は、
前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与手段と、
該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶するコレクションポイント記憶手段と、
を含み、
前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、
前記コレクションポイント記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与手段を含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項2】 請求項1に記載のゲーム装置において、
前記コレクションアイテム付与手段により既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを出力する付与済みコレクションアイテム出力手段をさらに含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項3】 請求項1又は2に記載のゲーム装置において、
前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、前記コレクションアイテム付与手段により未だ付与されていないコレクションアイテムの数をプレイヤに報知する未取得コレクションアイテム数報知手段をさらに含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項4】 請求項1乃至3のいずれかに記載のゲーム装置において、
前記第2のゲーム提供手段は、前記付与済みコレクションアイテム出力手段は、既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを一覧表示出力する一覧表示出力手段を含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項5】 請求項1乃至4のいずれかに記載のゲーム装置において、
前記コレクションアイテム付与手段は、
所定数のコレクションアイテムのそれぞれに設定されたアイテム付与確率を記憶するアイテム付与確率記憶手段と、
前記アイテム付与確率に従って前記所定数のコレクションアイテムの中からプレイヤに付与するものを選択するコレクションアイテム選択手段と、
を含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項6】 請求項1乃至5のいずれかに記載のゲーム装置において、
前記第1ゲームは、音楽に合せたタイミングでプレイヤ

にステップを行わせるゲームであることを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項7】 第1ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第1ゲーム提供ステップと、
第2ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第2ゲーム提供ステップと、
を含むゲーム装置の制御方法において、
前記第1ゲーム提供ステップは、
前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与ステップと、
該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶手段に記憶するコレクションポイント記憶ステップと、
を含み、
前記第2ゲーム提供ステップは、
前記記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与ステップを含むことを特徴とするゲーム装置の制御方法。

【請求項8】 第1ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第1ゲーム提供手段と、第2ゲームをプレイヤに提供する第2ゲーム提供手段と、を含むゲーム装置としてコンピュータを動作させるためのプログラムを格納した情報記憶媒体であって、
前記第1ゲーム提供手段は、
前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与手段と、
該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶するコレクションポイント記憶手段と、
を含み、
前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、
前記コレクションポイント記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与手段を含むことを特徴とする情報記憶媒体。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明はゲーム装置、ゲーム装置の制御方法及び情報記憶媒体に関し、特にゲームを繰り返すことへの欲求を効果的に高める技術に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】表面に複数のステップ位置を指示するためのマークが表されており、それらステップ位置にプレイヤの足が載っているか否かを検出するセンサが設けられた専用コントローラを用いる音楽志向型ゲームが人気を博している。例えば、コナミ株式会社が製造販売する「ビートマニア(商標)」や「ダンス・ダンス・レボリ

ーション(商標)」がそれである。このゲームでは、ゲーム音楽に合わせてその専用コントローラの上でステップを踏むことにより、プレイヤーはダンスを踊る気分を味わうことができる。

【0003】かかる音楽志向型ゲームでは、各ステップ位置をステップすべきタイミングがゲーム音楽のリズムに合わせて定められており、それがデータ化されている。そして、そのタイミングデータに基づき、複数のステップ位置のそれぞれに対し、ステップタイミングが徐々に到来する様子がディスプレイに表示されるようになっている。プレイヤーは、ディスプレイ画面及び音楽のリズムを参考にしながら、専用コントローラ上に案内表示されたステップ位置に足を載せる。そして、タイミングデータにより定義されたステップタイミングと、専用コントローラにより実際にプレイヤーが行ったステップタイミングとのずれの大小に基づいて、ゲーム成績が評価される。こうして、プレイヤーはゲーム成績に杞憂しつつ、ダンスを踊る気分を味わうことができるのである。

【0004】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】上記音楽志向型ゲームでは、タイミングデータにより定義されたステップタイミングと、専用コントローラにより実際にプレイヤーが行うステップタイミングとのずれを、専ら自分自身の努力により小さくすることができる。すなわち、上記音楽志向型ゲームでは、偶然的要素に左右されず、自分自身の努力だけでゲーム成績を向上させることができる。しかしながら、このように偶然的要素に左右されずに自分自身の努力だけでゲーム成績を向上させることができるのでは、プレイヤーが早く飽きてしまいがちである。

【0005】本発明は上記課題に鑑みてなされたものであって、その目的は、偶然的要素を含む簡単な第2ゲームを第1ゲームに付加することにより、第1ゲームのゲーム性を損なわず、ゲーム全体として飽きにくくでき、且つ第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高めることのできるゲーム装置、ゲーム装置の制御方法及び情報記憶媒体を提供することにある。

【0006】

【課題を解決するための手段】上記課題を解決するために、本発明に係るゲーム装置は、第1ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第1ゲーム提供手段と、第2ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第2ゲーム提供手段と、を含むゲーム装置において、前記第1ゲーム提供手段は、前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤーにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与手段と、該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶するコレクションポイント記憶手段と、を含み、前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、前記コレクションポイント記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤーにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与手段を含むことを

特徴とする。

【0007】また、本発明に係るゲーム装置の制御方法は、第1ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第1ゲーム提供ステップと、第2ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第2ゲーム提供ステップと、を含むゲーム装置の制御方法において、前記第1ゲーム提供ステップは、前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤーにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与ステップと、該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶手段に記憶するコレクションポイント記憶ステップと、を含み、前記第2ゲーム提供ステップは、前記記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤーにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与ステップを含むことを特徴とする。

【0008】また、本発明に係る情報記憶媒体は、第1ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第1ゲーム提供手段と、第2ゲームをプレイヤーに提供する第2ゲーム提供手段と、を含むゲーム装置としてコンピュータを動作させるためのプログラムを格納した情報記憶媒体であって、前記第1ゲーム提供手段は、前記第1ゲームでのゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤーにコレクションポイントを付与するコレクションポイント付与手段と、該コレクションポイント付与手段により付与されるコレクションポイントを記憶するコレクションポイント記憶手段と、を含み、前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、前記コレクションポイント記憶手段に記憶されるコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいてプレイヤーにコレクションアイテムを付与するコレクションアイテム付与手段を含むことを特徴とする。

【0009】本発明によれば、プレイヤーに第1ゲーム及び第2ゲームが提供され、このうち第1ゲームではゲーム成績に応じてプレイヤーにコレクションポイントが付与される。このコレクションポイントは一旦記憶され、第2ゲームにて、そのコレクションポイント及び乱数に基づいて、プレイヤーにコレクションアイテムが付与される。本発明では、第2ゲームは、乱数に基づいて付与されるコレクションアイテムをプレイヤーが収集する、いわば偶然的要素に支配されたゲームとして構成される。このため、第1ゲームを、例えば強制的に操作タイミングが要求され、それに従ってゲーム操作をすることでプレイヤーが好成績を得ることのできる、偶然的要素の少ないゲーム等で構成したとしても、プレイヤーにコレクションアイテムの収集目的を与えることができ、その結果、第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高めることができる。また、一旦コレクションポイントを付与・記憶し、そのコレクションポイントに基づいてコレクションアイテムを付与するので、第1ゲームと第2ゲームとを一応分離できる。こうして、第1ゲームのゲーム性を損なわず、ゲーム全体として飽きにくくでき、且つ第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高めることができる。

【0010】また、本発明の一態様では、前記コレクションアイテム付与手段により既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを出力する付与済みコレクションアイテム出力手段をさらに含む。こうすれば、プレイヤは既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを、例えば音声、表示又は印刷等により出力することができる。なお、コレクションアイテムをプレイヤの要求に応じて繰り返し出力できるようにすれば、プレイヤは何度でもコレクションアイテムの出力結果を得ることができ、第2ゲームの収集的性格を強めることができる。

【0011】また、本発明の一態様では、前記第2ゲーム提供手段は、前記コレクションアイテム付与手段により未だ付与されていないコレクションアイテムの数をプレイヤに報知する未取得コレクションアイテム数報知手段をさらに含む。こうすれば、プレイヤは未だ付与されていないコレクションアイテムの数を知らず、第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求をさらに高めることができる。

【0012】また、本発明の一態様では、前記第2のゲーム提供手段は、前記付与済みコレクションアイテム出力手段は、既に付与されたコレクションアイテムを一覧表示出力する一覧表示出力手段を含む。こうすれば、付与済みコレクションアイテムをプレイヤは一覧でき、プレイヤの収集欲を刺激し、第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求をさらに高めることができる。

【0013】また、本発明の一態様では、前記コレクションアイテム付与手段は、所定数のコレクションアイテムのそれぞれに設定されたアイテム付与確率を記憶するアイテム付与確率記憶手段と、前記アイテム付与確率に従って前記所定数のコレクションアイテムの中からプレイヤに付与するものを選択するコレクションアイテム選択手段と、を含む。こうすれば、コレクションアイテムの中でもプレイヤに付与され易いものと付与され難いものとを設定でき、プレイヤの収集欲を刺激し続けることができる。

【0014】さらに、本発明の一態様では、前記第1ゲームは、音楽に合せたタイミングでプレイヤにステップを行わせるゲームである。こうすれば、強制的に操作タイミングが要求され、それに従ってゲーム操作をすることでプレイヤが好成績を得ることのできる、偶然的要素の少ないゲームとして第1ゲームを構成することができるようになり、第2ゲームとの性格の違いを鮮明化でき、ゲーム全体の魅力を高めることができる。

【0015】

【発明の実施の形態】以下、本発明の好適な実施の形態について図面に基づき詳細に説明する。

【0016】図1は、本発明の一実施形態に係るゲーム装置の構成を示す図である。以下では、同図に示すゲーム装置10をプレイヤーがゲーム音楽を聞きながらステップを楽しむことのできる音楽志向型ゲーム装置として

機能させる技術について説明する。同図に示すゲーム装置10は、モニタ18及びスピーカ22に接続された家庭用ゲーム機11に、情報記憶媒体たるCD-ROM25が装着されることにより構成される。ここでは、ゲームプログラムやゲームデータを家庭用ゲーム機11に供給するためにCD-ROM25を用いるが、DVDやROMカード等、他のあらゆる情報記憶媒体を用いることができる。また、通信ネットワークを介して遠隔地からゲームプログラムやゲームデータを家庭用ゲーム機11に供給することもできる。

【0017】家庭用ゲーム機11は、CPU14、GPU16、SPU20、CD-ROM読取装置24、RAM26、ROM28及び入出力制御部30がバス12により相互データ通信可能に接続され、さらに入出力制御部30にコントローラ32及びメモ리카ード33が接続されてなるものである。コントローラ32以外の家庭用ゲーム機11の各構成要素は所定筐体内に収容されている。モニタ18には例えば家庭用のテレビ受像機が用いられ、スピーカ22には例えばその内蔵スピーカが用いられる。

【0018】CPU14はマイクロプロセッサを含んで構成されるものであり、ROM28に格納されるオペレーティングシステムやCD-ROM25から読み出されるゲームプログラムに基づいて、家庭用ゲーム機11の各部を制御する。バス12はアドレス及びデータを家庭用ゲーム機11の各部でやり取りするためのものである。ROM28には、家庭用ゲーム機11の全体の動作制御に必要なプログラムであるオペレーティングシステムが格納されている。また、RAM26には、CD-ROM25から読み取られたゲームプログラム及びゲームデータが必要に応じて書き込まれる。GPU（グラフィックスプロセッシングユニット）16はVRAMを含んで構成されており、CPU14から送られる画像データを受け取ってVRAM上にゲーム画面を描画するとともに、その内容を所定のビデオ信号に変換して所定タイミングでモニタ18に出力する。

【0019】SPU（サウンドプロセッシングユニット）20はサウンドバッファを含んで構成されており、CD-ROM25から読み出されてサウンドバッファに記憶された音楽やゲーム効果音等のデータを再生してスピーカ22から出力する。CD-ROM読取装置24は、CPU14からの指示に従ってCD-ROM25に記録されたゲームプログラム及びゲームデータを読み取る。

【0020】入出力制御部30は一以上の外部入出力機器を家庭用ゲーム機器11に接続するためのインタフェースであり、ここではコントローラ32及びメモ리카ード33が着脱自在に取り付けられている。メモ리카ード33以外の補助記憶装置や、モデムやターミナルアダプタ等の外部通信機器を接続するようにしてもよい。コン

トローラ32はプレイヤーがゲーム操作をするための入力手段である。入出力制御部30は一定周期(例えば1/60秒毎)にコントローラ32の各種ボタンの操作状態をスキャンし、そのスキャン結果を表す操作信号をバス12を介してCPU14に渡す。CPU14は、その操作信号に基づいてプレイヤーのゲーム操作を判定する。

【0021】図2は、コントローラ32の一例を示す図である。同図に示すコントローラ32は、音楽志向型ゲームのプレイに特に用意された専用コントローラであって、ダンスステージとして相応しい程度の大きさを有するマット状の部材である。プレイヤーがこのコントローラ32上でステップを踏むと、両足の位置を表す操作信号が家庭用ゲーム機11に送られるようになっている。同図に示すように、このコントローラ32は、表面中央に略円形の中央領域34Cが区画表示されており、その上下左右に、方向ボタン入力領域34U、34D、34L、34Rがそれぞれ区画表示されている。また、方向ボタン入力領域34Uの左右には、丸ボタン入力領域38Aとバツボタン入力領域38Bとが区画表示されている。さらに、丸ボタン入力領域38Aの上方にはスタートボタン入力領域36Aが、バツボタン入力領域36Bの上方にはセレクトボタン入力領域36Bが、それぞれ区画表示されている。また、方向ボタン入力領域34Rには右矢印の模様、方向ボタン入力領域34Lには左矢印の模様、方向ボタン入力領域34Uには上矢印の模様、方向ボタン入力領域34Dには下矢印の模様が、それぞれ表されている。また、丸ボタン入力領域38Aには丸印(○)が表されており、バツボタン入力領域38Bにはバツ印(×)が表されている。さらに、スタートボタン入力領域36Aには「START」の文字が表されており、セレクトボタン入力領域36Bには「SELECT」の文字が表されている。

【0022】方向ボタン入力領域34U、34D、34L、34R、丸ボタン入力領域38A、バツボタン入力領域38B、スタートボタン入力領域36A、セレクトボタン入力領域38Bの下部にはセンサが埋め込まれており、プレイヤーが各領域に足を載せると、その旨が操作信号として家庭用ゲーム機11に送られる。方向ボタン入力領域34U、34D、34L、34Rは、主としてダンスステップを入力するために用いられるが、その他、各種メニュー選択のためにも用いられる。スタートボタン入力領域36Aは、ゲームのスタートや各種決定などに用いられる。セレクトボタン入力領域36Bは、主として各種メニュー画面の呼び出しに用いられる。丸ボタン入力領域38Aは主として各種決定のため、バツボタン入力領域38Bは各種キャンセルやゲーム強制終了のために用いられる。

【0023】図3は、CD-ROM25から読み出されるゲームプログラム及びゲームデータに基づいてモニタ

18に生成されるゲーム画面の一例を示す図である。同図に示すゲーム画面40はメインゲーム(第1ゲーム)時のものであり、背景画像46が全面に表示され、その上にダンスゲージ50と、基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rと、タイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rと、スコア42と、メッセージ52と、が重畳表示されている。スコア42はゲーム画面40の左側最下段に表示されており、これまでの累積点数を表示するものである。メッセージ52は画面左側中段に表示されており、プレイヤーの操作の巧拙に応じた内容の文字を表示するものである。例えば「GREAT」、「PERFECT」、「GOOD」、「BOO」等の文字が表示される。

【0024】ダンスゲージ50は画面左上に表示されており、ステップの巧拙に応じて伸縮するゲージバーを含んでいる。例えばステップが高い評価を受けた場合はゲージバーは右方向に伸び、逆にステップが低い評価しか受けられなかった場合はゲージバーは左方向に縮む。ゲージバーが所定長よりも短くなった場合にはゲームオーバーとなるようになっており、プレイヤーはダンスゲージ50を見てゲームオーバーが迫っているかを判断することができる。なお、ゲーム装置10には2つのコントローラ32を接続可能となっており、ダンスゲージ50が画面左上に表示されるのは1人プレイ且つ1人プレイ用のコントローラ32からゲームスタートした場合である。2人プレイ用のコントローラ32からゲームスタートした場合には画面右上に表示される。また、2人プレイの場合には、画面上方の左右両方に表示される。ダンスゲージ50の下側には、基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rがこの順で表示されている。基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rは、プレイヤーがステップを踏むタイミングを判断するための基準である。

【0025】すなわち、基準矢印マーク48Lは方向ボタン入力領域34Lに、基準矢印マーク48Dは方向ボタン入力領域34Dに、基準矢印マーク48Uは方向ボタン入力領域34Uに、基準矢印マーク48Rは方向ボタン入力領域34Rに、それぞれ対応付けられている。そして、基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rの下方の比較的広い画面領域には、時間の推移にしたがって上方向に移動するタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rが表示されており、このタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rが基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rに重なるタイミングにて、それら基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rに対応する方向ボタン入力領域34L、34D、34U、34Rの上を足で踏むことにより、高評価を得てダンスゲージ50を伸張させることができるようになっていいる。例えば同図においてはタイミング案内矢印マーク44Uが基準矢印マーク48Uに重

なろうとしているところである。この少し後でプレイヤーがコントローラ32の方向ボタン入力領域34Uの上を足で踏むことにより、高評価を得ることができる。

【0026】なお、必ずしもタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rが基準矢印マーク48L、48D、48U、48Rに完全に重なるタイミングでプレイヤーがコントローラ32を操作しなければ肯定的評価を得ることができないという訳ではなく、その一致度に応じて評価が与えられるようになっている。なお、タイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rは後述するステップデータに基づき表示されるようになっている。

【0027】タイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rは、具体的には次のようにして表示される。ゲーム音楽の再生が開始されると、例えば現在以降の2小節分のステップタイミングを案内表示範囲とした場合、CPU14はその範囲に含まれるステップタイミングをステップデータから読み出す。そして、そのステップデータに基づいてタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rを表す画像データを生成する。この画像データは、ステップタイミングが近いものから順に下方に向かってステップタイミングが遠いものが並ぶように表示位置が調整されたものである。

【0028】このとき、基準矢印マーク48Lの下方には、方向ボタン入力領域34Lへのステップタイミングを表すタイミング案内矢印マーク44Lが表示され、基準矢印マーク48Dの下方には、方向ボタン入力領域34Dへのステップタイミングを表すタイミング案内矢印マーク44Dが表示され、基準矢印マーク48Uの下方には、方向ボタン入力領域34Uへのステップタイミングを表すタイミング案内矢印マーク44Uが表示され、基準矢印マーク48Rの下方には、方向ボタン入力領域34Rへのステップタイミングを表すタイミング案内矢印マーク44Rが表示される。同図では、各列に1つのタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rが表示されているが、ステップタイミングの到来状況によっては複数表示される。生成された画像データは背景画像46に重畳され、ゲーム画面40の一部をなす。以上の処理は所定周期で繰り返される。

【0029】案内表示範囲の先頭はその時点でのゲーム音楽の演奏位置と対応しており、処理毎に所定量ずつ案内表示範囲が曲の先頭から後方向にずらされる。こうして、タイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rが曲の進行に合わせて徐々に上方に移動する。このようにしてタイミング案内矢印マーク44L、44D、44U、44Rを表示すれば、ゲーム画面40により、プレイヤーはステップタイミングの到来状況を容易に把握できるようにする。

【0030】ここで、CD-ROM25に格納されているデータについて説明する。CD-ROM25には、家

庭用ゲーム機11を音楽ゲームとして機能させるため、ゲームプログラム、各種ゲーム効果音データ、各種ゲーム画像データの他、ゲーム音楽データが格納されている。

【0031】図4は、CD-ROM25に格納される、あるゲーム音楽に対応するゲーム音楽データを説明する図である。同図に示すように、ゲーム音楽データはオリジナル音楽データ、ステップデータ、タイミングテーブル、及び背景画像データを含んでいる。オリジナル音楽データは、例えば一般のポピュラー音楽等をオリジナル音楽として所定ストリームデータの形式で保存したものである。CD-ROM読取装置24は、CPU14からの指示に従ってオリジナル音楽データを読み出すと、必要に応じてデータ処理を施し、それをバス12を介することなく直接SPU20に供給することもできる。SPU20はCD-ROM読取装置24から直接データを受け取ると、それをD/A変換してスピーカ22に供給する。

【0032】ステップデータは、対応するゲーム音楽を再生した場合にプレイヤーが操作すべき手順を定義したものである。このステップデータは、対応するゲーム音楽のリズムに応じて作成される。なお、1つのゲーム音楽に対してステップデータを複数組用意しておき、難易度やプレイモード等に応じて使い分けるようにしてもよい。ステップデータは、対応するゲーム音楽の各小節に対応する複数のデータブロックを含んでいる。各データブロックは、対応ゲーム音楽の小節を所定拍数、例えば4拍や8拍に分解したときに、コントローラ32のどのボタンが何拍目に操作されるべきかを特定する情報を含んで構成されている。

【0033】タイミングテーブルは、対応ゲーム音楽とステップデータとのタイミング合わせのために用意されたものであり、CPU14は該タイミングテーブルを参照して対応ゲーム音楽の現在の演奏位置に対応するステップデータを特定することができるようになっている。一方、背景画像データは、例えば図3に示されるゲーム画面40のうち背景画像46を表示するためのものである。この背景画像データは動画画像データであってもよいし、静止画像データであってもよい。ゲーム音楽毎に、その雰囲気合った背景画像が選択されており、プレイヤーの気分を視覚的に盛り上げるようになっている。

【0034】ここで、家庭用ゲーム機11により実行されるゲームプログラムの処理を説明する。図5は、CD-ROM25に格納されたゲームプログラムの処理（メインゲーム処理）を説明するフロー図である。プレイヤーがCD-ROM25をCD-ROM読取装置24にセットし、家庭用ゲーム機11の電源を投入すると、まずROM28に格納されているオペレーティングシステムが実行され、各種初期化動作が行われる。この際、CD-ROM25に格納されているゲームプログラムのうち

当面の処理に必要な部分がRAM 26にロードされる。ゲームプログラムに従い、ゲームタイトル等の表示がモニタ18により行なわれ、その後、自動的に或いはコントローラ32による操作に従ってメインメニューが表示される。ここで、プレイヤーがメインゲームを選択すると同図に示されるゲーム処理が開始される。

【0035】この処理では、まずモニタ18にプレイ条件設定メニューが表示される。ここでは、プレイヤーがプレイ人数(一人用又は二人用)や難易度等(プレイ条件)を設定入力する(S100)。次に、CPU14は演奏可能な複数の音楽(楽曲)のタイトルを表示して、プレイヤーに選択を促す。そして、これに応じてプレイヤーがコントローラ32により楽曲を選択すると、それを演奏曲として決定する(S101)。その後、そのゲーム音楽に関わるデータをロードする(S102)。具体的には、図4に示される一群のデータがロードされる。このうち、オリジナル音楽データについてはCD-ROM読取装置24からSPU20に直接渡され、直ちに再生出力が開始される(S103)。また、その他のデータはRAM26にロードされる。

【0036】次に、CPU14は、読み出したゲーム音楽データのうちステップデータに基づき、ステップ案内用の画像データを例えば図3のようにして生成し、それをモニタ18に出力することによりステップ案内を更新する(S104)。この際、CPU14は、ステップデータとオリジナル音楽データとの対応関係を、タイミングテーブルに従って判断する。ステップデータ及びタイミングテーブルはS101にて選択された曲、及びS100にて選択された難易度に対応するものが使用される。

【0037】その後、プレイ評価処理が行われる(S105)。図6は、このプレイ評価処理を説明するフロー図である。同図に示すように、このプレイ評価処理では、まず現在の演奏位置とステップデータとに基づいて、現在の演奏位置が評価期間に属するか否かを判断する(S200)。評価期間は、プレイヤーのステップタイミングをステップデータに定義されたタイミングと照らし合わせる期間である。ある瞬間がステップタイミングとしてステップデータに定義されていると、その前後の所定時間幅の期間が評価期間とされる。

【0038】現在の演奏位置が評価期間に属する場合、コントローラ32の操作状態を取得し(S201)、それに基づいてプレイヤーのステップを評価する(S202)。すなわち、ステップデータによれば、現在評価期間に入っているのが、方向ボタン入力領域34L、34U、34D、34Rのいずれに係るステップであるかが分かる。このため、ここでは評価対象となっている方向ボタン入力領域34L、34U、34D、34Rが実際に踏まれているか否かを判断し、そのステップタイミングがステップデータに定義されたものとどれだけずれて

いるかを調べる。そして、ずれが小さいほど高い評価を与えるようにする。例えば、ずれが零である場合には最高点、ずれが最大である場合には零点、誤った方向ボタン入力領域34が踏まれている場合や何も踏まれていない場合は負の点を与えるようにする。なお、複数の方向ボタン入力領域34に係るステップが評価対象となった場合には、方向ボタン入力領域34毎に同様に評価する。評価結果はRAM26に保存されるとともに、今回の得点がRAM26に保存されているこれまでの得点に加算され、それが通算成績とされる。この通算成績はスコア42として表示される(S203)。このとき、ダンスゲージ50の表示状態も更新される。すなわち高い評価が得られた場合にはゲージバーを右方向に伸ばし、逆に低い評価しか得られなかった場合にはゲージバーを左方向に縮める。また、ステップS202で得られた評価に応じてメッセージ52をゲーム画面40に表示する。

【0039】図5に戻り、その後、CPU14はゲームプレイが終了条件を満たしているを判断する(S106)。具体的には、プレイヤーがコントローラ32のスタートボタン入力領域36Aが踏まれた場合や、演奏曲が終了した場合にゲームプレイが終了する。ゲームプレイが終了条件を満たしている場合には、RAM26の内容に基づいてプレイ全体についての総合評価を行い、それをプレイ結果としてモニタ18に表示する(S107)。なお、スタートボタン入力領域36Aが踏まれた場合は強制終了であり、総合評価はキャンセルされる。一方、ゲームプレイが終了条件を満たしていない場合、S104に処理を戻す。

【0040】図7は、ゲームプレイ後にモニタ18に表示されるゲーム画面の一例を示す図である。同図に示すプレイ結果表示画面70は直前ステージでのプレイ全体に対する総合評価を表したものであり、左上には評価ランク72が表示され、その下に評価詳細76が表示され、さらにその下に得点78が表示されている。評価ランク72はプレイヤのステップ(ゲーム操作)がどのランクに属するかを示すものであり(ランクSS、S、A、B、C、D、Eのいずれか)、評価詳細76は個々のステップに対する評価(メッセージ52)の集計結果を示すものである。また、得点78はそのステージでの得点及び通算得点を示すものである。これらの表示はRAM26に記録されたプレイ評価に基づいて行われる。

【0041】また、プレイ結果表示画面70では、キャラクタ動画像73が評価ランク72と同段に表示されており、キャラクタが星形オブジェクトを落とし、その数に応じてドローカウント74の数値が増える様子が演出されるようになってきている。すなわち、このゲーム装置10では評価ランク72に応じてプレイヤーにドローカウント値(コレクションポイント)が付与されるようになっており、ドローカウント値と引き替えにカード画像(コ

レクションアイテム)を入手できるようになっている。ドロークラウン値が付与されるとメモリカード33にプレイヤーが現在所持するドロークラウン値が記録されるようになっている。プレイ結果表示画面70では、そのドロークラウン値がドロークラウン74として当初表示されており、その後、評価ランク72に応じた値がドロークラウン74に表される数値に加算される様子が動画表示されている。こうして、評価ランク72に応じてプレイヤーが所持するドロークラウン値が増える様子を好適に演出している。なお、新たにドロークラウン値が加算されると、加算後のドロークラウン値がメモリカード33に上書き記憶される。

【0042】プレイヤーがドロークラウン値を取得すると、図示しないモード選択画面によりカード選択画面に移行できるようになっている。図8は、カード選択画面の一例を示す図である。このカード選択画面80では、裏返しにされた64枚のカードが円弧状に並べられている様子がカード群画像82により表されている。このカード選択画面80がモニタ18に表示された状態でプレイヤーが丸ボタン入力領域38Aを踏むと、カード群画像82に表されている一枚のカードがまず識別表示(例えば高輝度表示)され、その後、その識別表示が順次隣カードに移るようになっていく。こうして、64枚のカードをいわばルーレット表示して、64枚のカードのうち好きなものを選択するようプレイヤーに案内するようになっている。このカード選択画面80では、さらに左下に未取得カード表示欄88が設けられている。未取得カード表示欄88は1から64の数字を配列表示したものであり、取得済みのカードに対応する数字は低輝度表示され、逆に未取得カードについては高輝度表示されるようになっていく。こうして、未取得カードの枚数をプレイヤーに報知し、プレイヤーの収集欲を刺激するようにしている。ここでは未取得カードの番号を低輝度表示して、未取得カードの枚数を間接的にプレイヤーに報知するようにしたが、未取得カードの枚数を直接的にプレイヤーに報知するようにしてもよい(例えば「あと〇枚です。」等)。このカード選択画面80では、さらに下段中央に取得カード枚数及び残存ドロークラウン値を表示するカード取得状況表示欄86も設けられている。プレイヤーは同欄を見ることにより、残りの所持ドロークラウン値を知ることができるとともに、カード選択画面80で今回取得したカード枚数を知ることができる。

【0043】図8に示されるカード選択画面80において、カード群画像82がルーレット表示された状態で、プレイヤーがコントローラ32の丸ボタン入力領域38Aを踏むと、図9に示される取得カード表示画面80aに画面が切り替わる。この取得カード表示画面80aでは、プレイヤーがドロークラウン値と引き替えに取得したカード画像94が中央に表示されるとともに、その下に同カード画像94のシリアル番号及び現在までに同カー

ド画像94を取得した回数を示す取得カード画像説明欄92が表示される。なお、プレイヤーが初めてのカード画像を取得した場合には、同取得カード画像説明欄92の右側に「NEW!!」とのメッセージ90が表示される。

【0044】以上のようにしてドロークラウン値と引き替えにカード画像を取得すると、後刻、プレイヤーは既に取得したカード画像を見ることができるようになっている。図10は、このときにモニタ18に表示されるコレクション画面を示す図である。このコレクション画面98では、一覧表示欄96でプレイヤーが既に取得したカード画像が一覧表示(サムネイル表示)されており、プレイヤーがコントローラ32を操作してカーソルを所望のカード画像に合わせると、そのカード画像の拡大表示が画面右上に設けられた拡大表示欄102に得られるようになっていく。また、同拡大表示欄102の下側にはさらに詳細説明欄100が設けられており、そこに拡大表示欄102に現在表示されているカード画像のシリアル番号、タイプ(種別)、レアリティ(稀少度)及び取得数(枚数)が表示されるとともに、さらに64種類中の何種類を既に取得したか、その総取得数(取得済み種類数)及び達成率(総種類数に対する取得済み種類数の割合)が表示されるようになっていく。

【0045】ここで、図8及び図9に示されるカード付与処理について説明する。図11は、ゲーム装置10で実施されるカード付与処理を説明するフロー図である。同図に示される処理はCD-ROM25に格納されたプログラムをCPU14が実行することにより実現されるものである。

【0046】ゲーム装置10では、プレイヤーは所定モード選択画面(図示せず)でカード画像の付与を選択すると、図8に示されるカード選択画面80のうちルーレット表示が未だなされていないものが初期画面としてモニタ18に表示される(S301)。そして、CPU14はコントローラ32の丸ボタン入力領域38A又はパッドボタン入力領域38Bが踏まれているかを監視する(S302)。パッドボタン入力領域38Bが踏まれている場合には、カード画像の付与をキャンセルしたと判断し、図示しないモード選択画面に復帰する。一方、丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれている場合には、次にメモリカード33に記憶されているドロークラウン値が1以上であるかを判断する(S303)。そして、ドロークラウン値が1未満であればS301に戻る。一方、ドロークラウン値が1以上であれば公知のアルゴリズムにより乱数を発生し、その乱数及び所定付与確率に基づいてプレイヤーに付与するカード画像のシリアル番号を決定する(S304)。すなわち、このゲーム装置10では、カード画像の希少性に差を持たせるようにするため、各カード画像に予め付与確率を設定している。例えば、あるカード画像に約1%の付与確率を設定するには、0から

255の範囲で乱数を発生する場合、得られた乱数が0乃至3であるとき、そのカード画像をプレイヤに付与するようにすればよい。このようにカード画像の希少性に差を持たせ、あるカード画像については稀にしか付与されないようにすれば、プレイヤの収集欲を刺激して、音楽志向型ゲームをさらにプレイしようという動機付けを与えることができる。

【0047】カード画像のシリアル番号が決定されると、次にそのカード画像のCD-ROM25からRAM26への転送をバックグラウンドで開始する(S305)。さらに、カード群画像82にルーレット表示を行わせる(S306)。そして、この状態でCPU14はコントローラ32で丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれたかを監視し(S307)、丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれるまではルーレット表示を続行する。ルーレット表示の最中に丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれると、ルーレット表示を停止し、さらにCPU14はメモリカード33に記憶されているドロウカウント値を1だけ減じる(S308)。その後、CPU14はS305で開始したカード画像のRAM26へのロードが終了するのを待機する(S309)。待機中にカード画像のロードが終了するか、或いはそれ以前にロードが既に終了していれば、RAM26にロードされているカード画像(圧縮画像データの形式でCD-ROM25に格納され、そのままRAM25にロードされている。)の圧縮を解き、GPU16に備えられたVRAMに転送する(S310)。そして、そのVRAMに転送されたカード画像を用いて取得カード表示画面80aをモニタ18に出力するためのフレーム画像を生成するようGPU16に指示する(S311)。こうして生成されるフレーム画像は、所定タイミングでVRAMから読み出されてモニタ18に出力され、取得カード表示画面80aが表示出力されることになる。なお、図9に示される取得カード表示画面80aと図8に示されるカード選択画面80との間では、プレイヤが丸ボタン入力領域38Aを踏んだタイミングで識別表示(高輝度表示)されているカードが引かれ、それが裏返される様子を動画像表示するようにしている。

【0048】取得カード表示画面80aが表示されると、CPU14はプレイヤがコントローラ32の丸ボタン入力領域38Aを踏んだかを監視する(S312)。丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれると、プレイヤが取得したカード画像を確認したものと判断し、別カードがカード山に補充され、それがシャッフルされる様子を演出表示する(S313)。

【0049】以上のカード付与処理では、プレイヤの操作とは無関係に乱数及び予め各カード画像に設定した付与確率に基づいて、カード画像を付与している。このため、カード画像の希少性に差を持たせることができる。また、このようにカード画像はプレイヤの操作とは無関

係に付与されるものであるが、カード群画像82をルーレット表示するとともに、コントローラ32による操作に応じてそのルーレット表示を停止させ、そのタイミングで識別表示されているカードをあたかもプレイヤが取得したかのように演出するようにしているため、自らカード画像を選択したかのように錯覚させることができる。さらに、カード群画像82をルーレット表示させる前に、コントローラ32の操作とは無関係に付与すべきカード画像を決定するようにしているため、プレイヤがカードを選択しようとして迷っている間にカード画像をCD-ROM25からロードしておくことができ、丸ボタン入力領域38Aが踏まれたときに速やかに取得カード画像を表示することができる。

【0050】以上説明したゲーム装置10によれば、ステージ終了後のプレイ結果表示画面70においてプレイヤにドロウカウント値が与えられ、このドロウカウント値と引き替えにカード画像が後刻与えられるので、プレイヤはカード画像を収集しようと、さらにメインゲームたる音楽志向型ゲームをプレイすることができる。

【0051】なお、本発明は以上説明した実施の形態に限定されるものではない。

【0052】例えば、以上の説明は本発明を家庭用ゲーム機11を用いて実施する例についてのものであるが、業務用ゲーム装置にも本発明は同様に適用可能である。この場合、CD-ROM25に代えてより高速な記憶装置を用い、モニタ18やスピーカ22も一体的に形成することが望ましい。

【0053】また、以上の説明ではゲームプログラム及びゲームデータを格納したCD-ROM25を家庭用ゲーム機11で使用するようにしたが、パーソナルコンピュータ等、ゲームプログラム及びゲームデータを記録した情報記憶媒体を読み取って、その読み取った内容に基づく情報処理が可能なコンピュータであれば、どのようなものでも使用することができる。

【0054】また、以上の説明ではダンスを踊る気分を味わうことのできるゲーム装置10に本発明を適用したが、他のあらゆる種類のゲームに適用可能である。

【0055】また、以上の説明では取得済みのカード画像がモニタ18に表示出力されるだけであったが、ゲーム装置10に印刷装置を接続してカード画像を印刷出力できるようにしてもよい。また、各カード画像を表すデータ又は各カード画像に対する表示許可コードをメモリカード33に記憶させるようにして、他のゲーム装置10のプレイヤと収集したカード画像又は表示許可コードを交換できるようにしてもよい。

【0056】さらに、以上の説明ではコレクションアイテムとしてカード画像をプレイヤに与えるようにしたが、カード画像のような静止画像データに限らず、動画データや音楽データ等、様々なデータをコレクションアイテムとして採用するようにもできる。

【0057】

【発明の効果】以上説明したように、本発明によれば、第2ゲームをいわば偶然的要素に支配されたゲームとして構成しているので、第1ゲームを偶然的要素の少ないゲーム等で構成したとしても、プレイヤにコレクションアイテムの収集目的を与えることができ、その結果、第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高めることができる。また、一旦コレクションポイントを付与・記憶し、そのコレクションポイントに基づいてコレクションアイテムを付与するので、第1ゲームと第2ゲームとを一応分離できる。こうして、第1ゲームのゲーム性を損なわず、ゲーム全体として飽きにくくでき、且つ第1ゲームに対する再挑戦の欲求を高めることができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】 本発明の一実施の形態に係るゲーム装置の構成を示す図である。

【図2】 コントローラの一例を示す概観図である。

【図3】 メインゲームにおけるゲーム画面の一例を示す図である。

【図4】 ゲーム音楽データの構成を示す図である。

【図5】 本発明の一実施の形態に係るゲーム装置におけるメインゲームに対するゲーム処理を説明するフロー図である。

【図6】 プレイ評価処理を説明するフロー図である。

【図7】 プレイ結果表示画面の一例を示す図である。

【図8】 カード選択画面の一例を示す図である。

【図9】 取得カード表示画面の一例を示す図である。

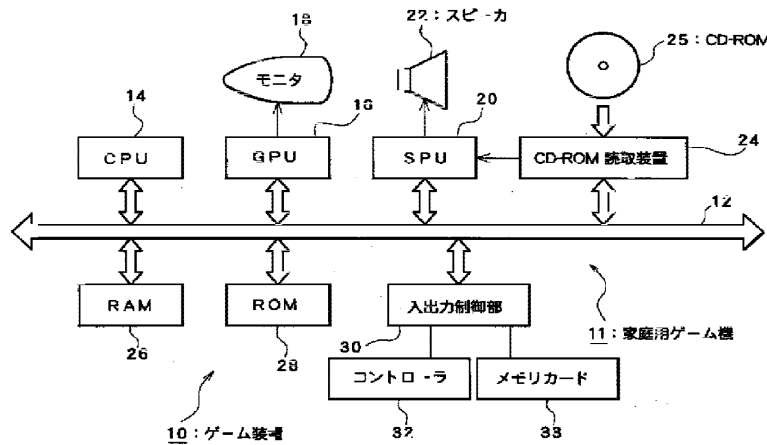
【図10】 コレクション画面の一例を示す図である。

【図11】 カード付与処理を説明するフロー図である。

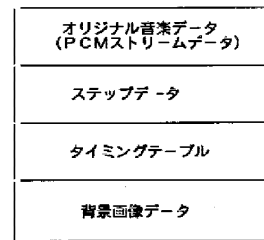
【符号の説明】

10 ゲーム装置、11 家庭用ゲーム機、12 バス、14 CPU、16グラフィックスプロセッシングユニット、18 モニタ、20 サウンドプロセッシングユニット、22 スピーカ、24 CD-ROM読取装置、25 CD-ROM、26 RAM、28 ROM、30 入出力制御部、32 コントローラ、33 メモリカード、34L、34U、34D、34R 方向ボタン入力領域、34C 中央領域、36A スタートボタン入力領域、38A 丸ボタン入力領域、38B パツボタン入力領域、40 ゲーム画面、42 スコア、44D、44R、44L、44U タイミング案内矢印マーク、46 背景画像、48D、48R、48L、48U 基準矢印マーク、50 ダンスゲージ、52、90 メッセージ、70 プレイ結果表示画面、72 評価ランク、73キャラクタ動画像、74 ドロークウント、76 評価詳細、78 得点、80カード選択画面、80a 取得カード表示画面、82 カード群画像、86カード取得状況表示欄、88 未取得カード表示欄、92 取得カード画像説明欄、94 カード画像、96 一覧表示欄、98 コレクション画面、100詳細説明欄、102 拡大表示欄。

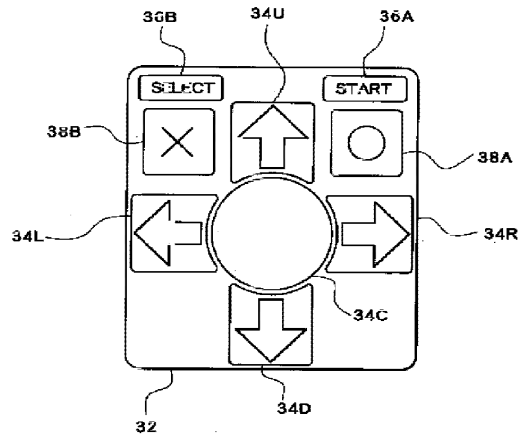
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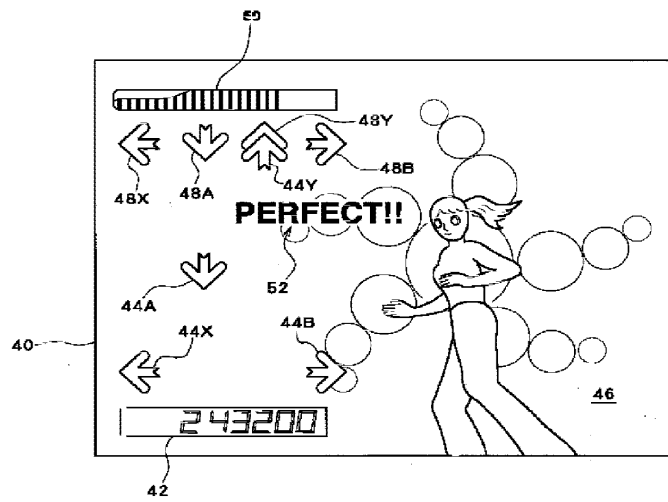
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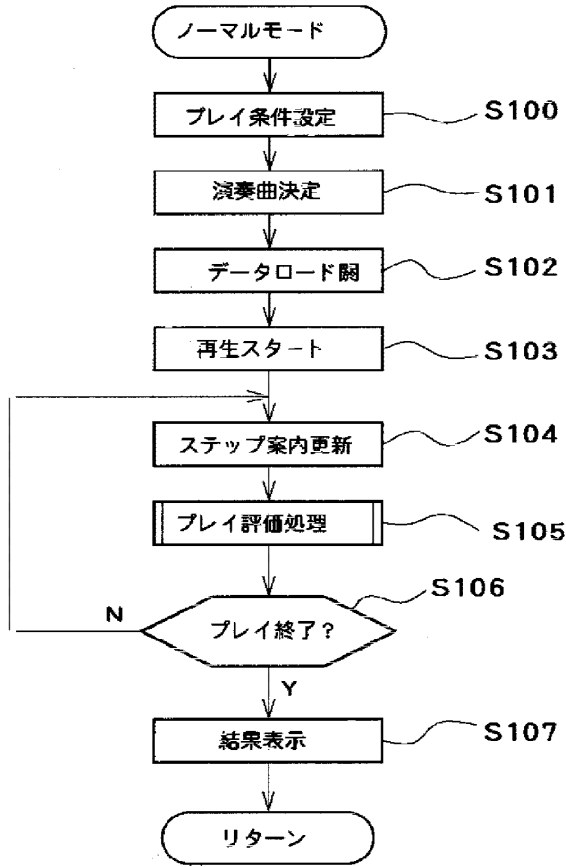
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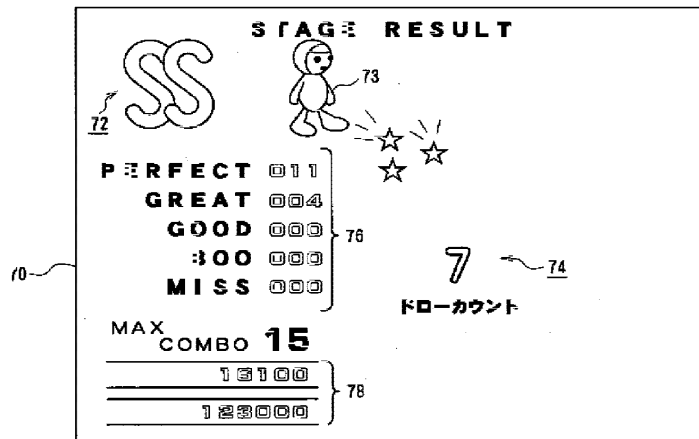
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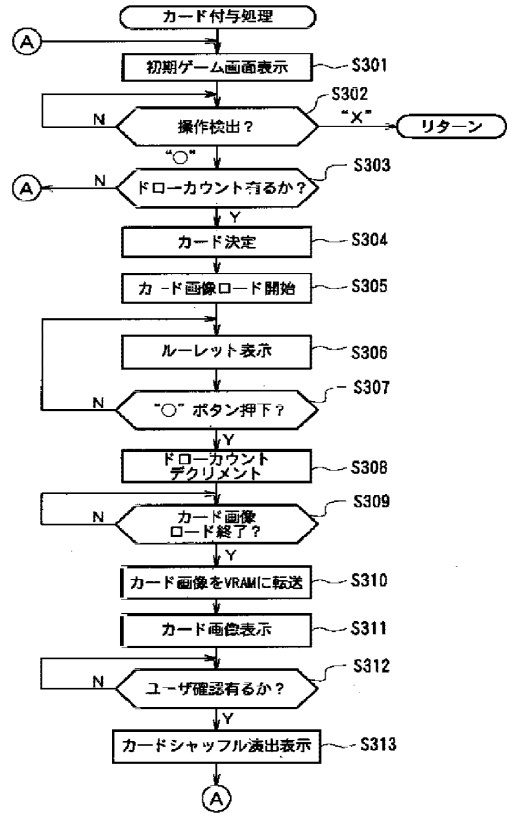
【図5】



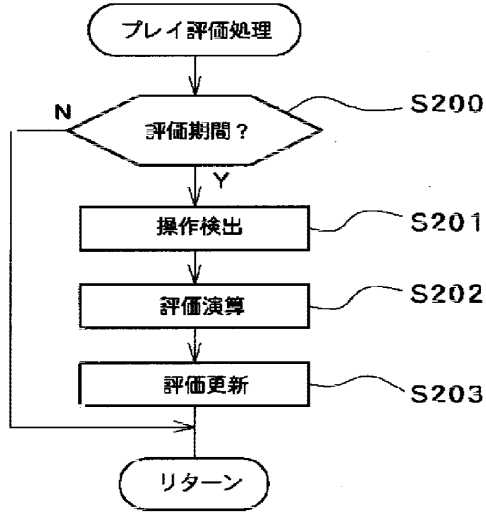
【図7】



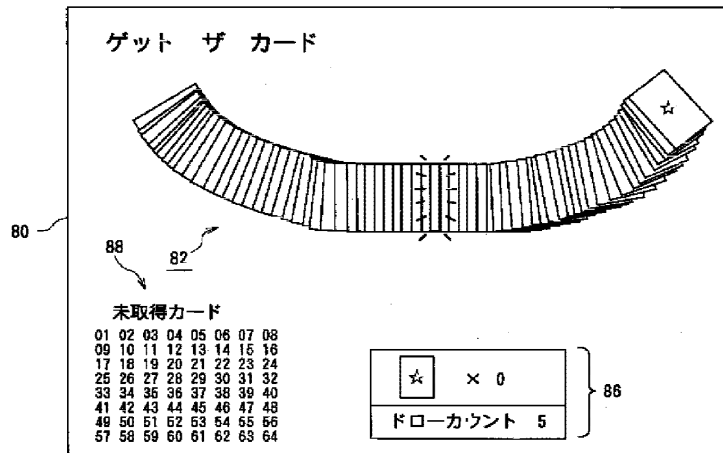
【図11】



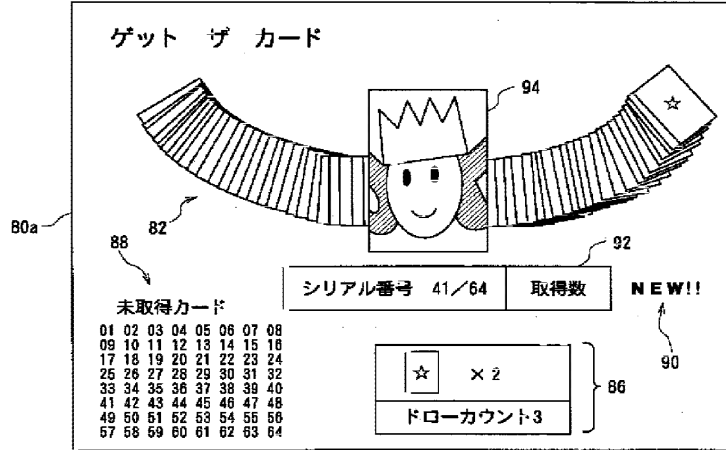
【図6】



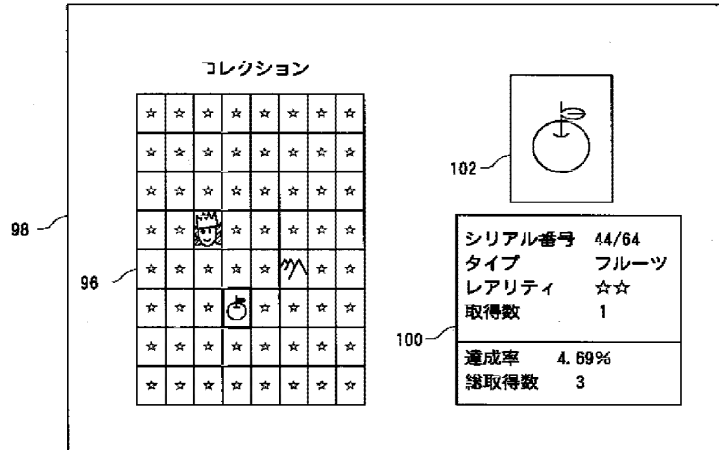
【図8】



【図9】



【図10】



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CA09 CB01 CB06 CB07 CC02
CC08



Espacenet

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GAME APPARATUS, METHOD FOR CONTROLLING THE SAME AND INFORMATION STORAGE MEDIUM

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Applicant(s): KONAMI CO LTD; KONAMI COMP ENTERTAINMENT ± (KONAMI CO LTD, ; KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT YOKYO INC)

Classification: - **international:** **A63F13/00; A63F13/10;** (IPC1-7): A63F13/00; A63F13/10

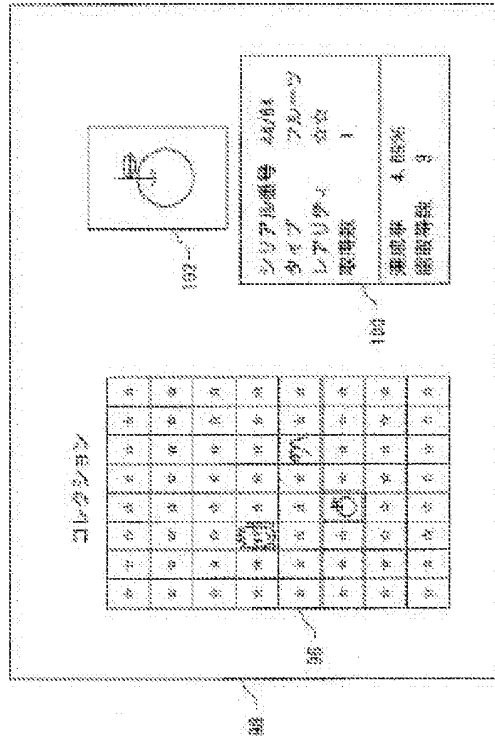
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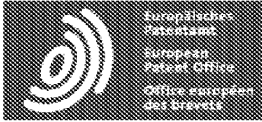
Application number: JP20000180516 20000615

Priority number(s): JP20000180516 20000615

Abstract of JP2001353371 (A)

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To prevent a player from easily getting tired of a game, as a whole, by adding a second game, which is simple and contains chance elements, to a first game, without injuring the game performance of the first game, and to enhance the desire to give again a challenge to the first game. **SOLUTION:** Correction points (draw points) are given to a player according to game results in a first game, and the correction points given are stored once. Then in a second game, a correction item (card image) is given to the player based on the correction points stored and random number. The correction item already given is timely outputted by means of display or the like.





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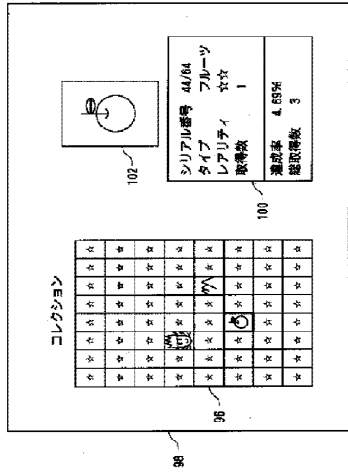
ABSTRACT JP2001353371

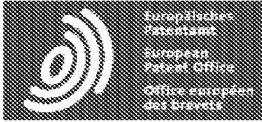
PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To prevent a player from easily getting tired of a game, as a whole, by adding a second game, which is simple and contains chance elements, to a first game, without injuring the game performance of the first game, and to enhance the desire to give again a challenge to the first game.

SOLUTION: Correction points (draw points) are given to a player according to game results in a first game, and the correction points given are stored once.

Then in a second game, a correction item (card image) is given to the player based on the correction points stored and random number.

The correction item already given is timely outputted by means of display or the like.





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DESCRIPTION JP2001353371

[0001]

The present invention game device TECHNICAL FIELD [0001], relates to a control method and information storage medium of the game device, related to effectively enhance technology in particular desire to be repeated game.

[0002]

BACKGROUND ART are represented marks for instructing a plurality of steps located on the surface, the music-oriented sensor for detecting whether or not the player's feet on their step position is resting is a dedicated controller provided type game is popular.

For example, Konami Corporation is manufactured and sold "beat Mania (TM)" and "Dance Dance Revolution (TM)" is it.

In this game, by stepping on the step in the dedicated controller to fit the game music, the player can enjoy the feeling of dancing.

[0003]

In such music-oriented games, the timing to be the step of each step position has been determined to match the game music rhythm, it is the data of.

Then, based on the timing data, for each of the plurality of step positions, how the step timing is gradually arriving is adapted to be displayed on the display.

Player, while the display screen and the rhythm of the music to reference, put a foot on the guide displayed step position on a dedicated controller.

Then, a step timing defined by the timing data, on the basis of the magnitude of deviation between the actual step timing the player performs a dedicated controller, game result is evaluated.

In this way, the player while groundless to game results, is be able to taste the mood to dance the dance.

[0004]

In the [invention attempts to solve to problem above music-oriented game, and the step timing defined by the timing data, and that the deviation of the actual and step timing the player carried out by a dedicated controller, to exclusively small due to their own efforts I can.

That is, in the music-oriented game, it is not affected by the accident factors, it is possible to improve the game score only their own efforts.

However, by way of this in without being influenced by chance elements only their own efforts can be made to improve the game score is tend tired quickly player.

[0005]

Invention there is provided which has been made in view of the above problems, and an object,

by adding a simple second games including accidental element to the first game, without losing the game of the first game, game as a whole can hardly get tired, and the game device capable of increasing the desire re challenge to the first game, is to provide a control method and an information storage medium of the game device.

[0006]

In order to solve the above problems [Means for Solving the Problems], game device according to the present invention, a first game providing means for providing a first game to a player, a second for providing a second game to the player imparting a game device comprising a game providing means, and the first game providing means, and collection points applying means for applying a collection points to the player according to the game results in the first game, by the collection point providing means includes a collection point storage means for storing a collection point to be a, the second game providing means, collection items imparting to impart the collection item to the player based on the collection point and the random number stored in the collection point storage means is characterized in that it includes means.

[0007]

Also, a control method of a game device according to the present invention, a first game providing step of providing a first game player, a control method of a game device comprising a second game providing step of providing a second game to the player, the In, the first game providing step includes a collection point giving step of imparting a collection points to the player according to the game results in the first game, stores the collection points given by the collection point providing means in the storage means which includes a collection point storage steps, said second game providing step is characterized in that it comprises a collection item imparting step of imparting the collection item to the player based on a collection point and the random number stored in the storage means .

[0008]

The information storage medium according to the present invention, a first game providing means for providing a first game to a player, causing a computer to operate as a game device comprising a second game providing means for providing a second game to the player, the An information storage medium storing a program for said first game providing means, and

collection points applying means for applying a collection points to the player according to the game results in the first game, the collection point awarding means and a collection point storage means for storing a collection points given, said second game providing means, a collection of imparting a collection item to the player based on the collection point and the random number stored in the collection point storage means is characterized in that it comprises an item assigning means.

[0009]

In accordance with the present invention, the first game and the second game is provided to the player, the collection points are awarded to the player according to the game results in these first game.

The collection point is temporarily stored, in the second game, based on the collection point and the random number, the collection items are awarded to the player.

In the present invention, the second game, the player collects collection item to be granted based on a random number, configured as dominated game to speak chance factors.

Therefore, the first game, for example, forced operation timing is required, it can be a player get good results by the game operation in accordance with, even if composed of low games, etc. of accidental elements, and the player it is possible to provide a collection purpose of collection items, as a result, it is possible to increase the desire for re-challenge to the first game.

Also, once granted, storing a collection point, because it imparts a collection items based on the collection point, once it is possible to separate the first game and the second game.

Thus, without impairing the game of the first game, it can be difficult to get bored as a whole game, and it is possible to increase the desire for re-challenge to the first game.

[0010]

In addition, in one aspect of the present invention, further including grants already collection items output means for outputting the collection items that have already been granted by the collection item grant means.

In this way, the player the collection items that have already been granted, for example, voice, can be output by the display or printing.

In addition, if to be able to repeatedly output according collection item in the request of the player, the player can be obtained an output result of many times collection items, can enhance the collection nature of the second game.

[0011]

Also, in one aspect of the present invention, the second game providing means further comprises a non-acquired collection item number notifying means for notifying the player the number of collection items that have not been granted yet by the collection item assigning means.

In this way, the player it is possible to know the number of collection items that have not yet been granted, it is possible to further improve the desire re challenge to the first game.

[0012]

Also, in one aspect of the present invention, the second game providing means, said grant Already collection items output means includes a list display output means for outputting a list collection items that have already been granted.

In this way, given Already collection items can the player list, and stimulates the desire of the player collection, it is possible to further improve the desire re challenge to the first game.

[0013]

Also, in one aspect of the present invention, the collection items applying means, and item given probability storage means for storing the items given probability set for each of a predetermined number of collection items, the collection of the predetermined number in accordance with the items given probability I includes a collection item selection means for selecting those awarded to the player from the item.

In this way, it is possible to be set and not easily granted as likely to be awarded to the player among the collection item, continue to stimulate the collection desire of the player.

[0014]

Furthermore, in one aspect of the present invention, the first game is a game that causes a step to the player at the timing that is the music.

In this way, force the operation timing is required, it can be a player get good results by the game operation in accordance with, it becomes possible to configure the first game as little game of chance elements, it is possible to sharpen the differences in characteristics of the second game, it is possible to increase the overall attraction games.

[0015]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION below, I will be described with respect to preferred embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawings in detail of the present invention.

[0016]

Figure 1 is a diagram showing a structure of a game device according to an embodiment of the present invention.

The following describes techniques to function as a music-oriented game device capable of enjoying the steps while listening to game music player game device 10 shown in FIG.

Game apparatus 10 shown in the figure, the monitor 18 and the home-use game machine 11 connected to the speaker 22, and by the information storage medium serving CD-ROM25 is mounted.

Here, it uses a CD-ROM25 for supplying a game program and game data to the consumer game machine 11, it is possible to use DVD or a ROM card, the any other information storage medium.

It is also possible that a game program and game data from a remote location is provided to the consumer game machine 11 via a communication network.

[0017]

Home game machine 11, CPU14, GPU16, SPU20, CD-ROM reader 24, RAM26, ROM28 and output control unit 30 are mutually data communicatively connected via a bus 12, further input and output control unit 30 to the controller 32 and it is intended that the memory card 33 is connected.

Each component of the controller 32 other than the home-use game machine 11 are accommodated in a predetermined housing.

For example a television receiver for home is used for the monitor 18, the speaker 22 for example a built-in speaker thereof.

[0018]

CPU14 is intended to be configured to include a microprocessor, based on the game program read from the operating system or CD-ROM25 stored in ROM28, and controls the respective units of the consumer game machine 11.

The bus 12 is for exchanging addresses and data among the respective units of the consumer game machine 11.

The ROM28, the operating system is a program necessary for the overall operation control of the consumer game machine 11 is stored.

Furthermore, the RAM26, the game program and game data read from the CD-ROM25 are written as needed.

GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) 16 is configured to include a VRAM, with draws a game screen in the VRAM receives the image data sent from the CPU14, the predetermined timing and converts the contents into a predetermined video signal in I will output to the monitor 18.

[0019]

SPU (sound processing unit) 20 is configured to include a sound buffer, and reproduces data such as music and game sound effects stored in the sound buffer to be read from the CD-ROM25 is output from the speaker 22.

CD-ROM reader 24 reads a game program and game data recorded in the CD-ROM25 in accordance with instructions from the CPU14.

[0020]

Output control unit 30 is an interface for connecting one or more external output devices to the home game machine 11, where the controller 32 and the memory card 33 is detachably attached.

Memory card 33 or other auxiliary storage device, may be connected to external communication equipment such as a modem or a terminal adapter.

The controller 32 is input means for a player to the game operation.

Output control unit 30 scans the operation states of various buttons of the controller 32 in a constant cycle (for example, every 1/60 second), and passes an operation signal representing the scanning result to the CPU14 via the bus 12.

CPU14 determines the game operation of the player based on the operation signal.

[0021]

Figure 2 is a diagram showing an example of the controller 32.

Controller 32 shown in the figure, it is a dedicated controller that is specifically provided to the play of the music-oriented game, a mat-like member having a large enough suitable as dance stage.

When the player steps on the step in the controller 32, the operation signal representing the position of the feet are adapted to be sent to the consumer game machine 11.

As shown in the figure, the controller 32, the surface center is partitioned displayed a substantially circular central region 34C, the above and below horizontal, direction button input region 34U, 34D, 34L, with 34R are sectioned respectively displayed there.

Also, the left and right direction button input region 34U, the circle button input area 38A and 38B cross button input area is pane.

In addition, the start button input area 36A above the circle button input area 38A is the select button input area 36B above the cross button input area 36B have been defined respectively displayed.

In addition, the pattern of right arrow in the direction button input area 34R, direction button input area pattern of the left arrow to 34L, pattern of up arrow in the direction button input area 34U, in the direction button input area 34D is pattern of down-arrow , and are represented,

respectively.

Also, the circle button input area 38A are circles (○) are represented, crosses (×) is represented in the cross button input area 38B.

In addition, the start button input area 36A is represented characters "START", are represented the characters "SELECT" is the select button input area 36B.

[0022]

Direction button input region 34U, 34D, 34L, 34R, a round button input area 38A, cross button input area 38B, the start button input area 36A, the lower portion of the select button input area 38B is embedded sensors, players in each area Placing your feet, that effect is sent to the home-use game machine 11 as an operation signal.

Direction button input region 34U, 34D, 34L, 34R, which are used to primarily enter the dance steps, etc., and is used also for various menu selections.

Start button input area 36A is used in a game of start and various decision.

Select button input area 36B is mainly used to call the various menu screens.

For the round button input area 38A primarily various decision, cross button input area 38B is used for a variety of cancellation or game kill.

[0023]

Figure 3 is a diagram showing an example of a game screen generated on the monitor 18 based on a game program and game data read from the CD-ROM25.

Game screen 40 shown in the figure is obtained when the main game (first game), the background image 46 is displayed on the entire surface, the dance gauge 50 thereon, the reference arrow marks 48L, 48D, 48U, and 48R, timing guidance arrow mark 44L, 44D, 44U, and 44R, and score 42, a message 52, is superimposed display.

Score 42 is displayed on the left bottom of the game screen 40, and is intended to display the cumulative points far.

Message 52 is displayed on the display on the left side of the middle screen, and is intended to display the contents of a character in accordance with the skill of the player's operation.

For example, "GREAT", "PERFECT", "GOOD" is displayed characters such as "BOO".

[0024]

Dance gauge 50 is displayed on the upper left, and includes a gauge bar which extends or contracts depending on the step of skill.

For example elongation step in the gauge bar is right if you have received high evaluation, contracts gauge bar to the left if you did not receive only the step is low evaluation reversed.

Gauge bar is has become such that the game is over in the case of shorter than a predetermined length, the player can determine whether the impending game over to look at the dance gauge 50.

Note that the game apparatus 10 has become possible to connect two controllers 32, the dance gauge 50 is displayed in the upper left screen is a case where the game started from the controller 32 for one play and one play.

Is displayed in the upper right corner of the screen when you start the game from the controller 32 for two people play.

Further, in the case of two people play, and is displayed on the left and right of the screen upward.

Below the dance gauge 50, reference arrows mark 48L, 48D, 48U, 48R are displayed in this order.

Reference arrow marks 48L, 48D, 48U, 48R is a criterion to determine when a player steps on the step.

[0025]

In other words, the reference arrow mark 48L direction button input area 34L, the reference arrow mark 48D direction button input area 34D, the reference arrow mark 48U direction button input area 34U, standard arrow mark 48R in the direction button input area 34R, I have associated with each.

The reference arrow mark 48L, 48D, 48U, a relatively large screen area below the 48R, the timing guidance arrow mark 44L to move upward according to the time of transition, 44D, 44U, and 44R are represented, The timing guide arrow mark 44L, 44D, 44U, 44R reference arrow mark 48L, 48D, 48U, at the timing that overlaps in 48R, those criteria arrow mark 48L, 48D, 48U, corresponding to the 48R direction button input area 34L, 34D, 34U, by stepping on the foot over 34R, and so can be stretched dance gauge 50 to give a high evaluation.

For example, in the figure it is where the timing guidance arrows 44U trying Kasanaro the reference arrow marks 48U.

By this slightly later player depresses the foot on the direction button input region 34U of the controller 32, it is possible to obtain a high evaluation.

[0026]

In addition, not necessarily the timing guidance arrows 44L, 44D, 44U, 44R reference arrow marks 48L, 48D, 48U, and that player at the timing overlap completely 48R can not be obtained a positive evaluation to be operated controller 32 mean rather, I have come to be given a rating according to the degree of coincidence.

The timing guidance arrows 44L, 44D, 44U, 44R are adapted to be displayed based on step data to be described later.

[0027]

Timing guidance arrows 44L, 44D, 44U, 44R are specifically displayed in the following manner.

The reproduction of the game music is started, for example when it is a guidance display range Step timing of two bars of the current and future, CPU14 reads out the steps timing included in the range from the step data.

The timing guidance arrows 44L on the basis of the step data, 44D, 44U, and generates image data representing the 44R.

The image data are those from the display position one step timing is close to align the furthest steps timing downward in the order has been adjusted.

[0028]

In this case, to below the reference arrow mark 48L, appears timing guidance arrow mark 44L representing the step timing of the direction button input area 34L, to below the reference arrow mark 48D, the step timing of the direction button input area 34D appears timing guidance arrows 44D representing the, below the reference arrow marks 48U, timing guidance arrows 44U representing the step timing of the direction button input region 34U is displayed below the reference arrow marks 48R, the direction timing guide arrow mark 44R representing the step timing to the button input area 34R is displayed.

In the figure, one of the timing guidance arrows 44L each column, 44D, 44U, 44R but are displayed, depending on the arrival status of the step timing may be more displayed.

The generated image data is superimposed on the background image 46, I form part of the game screen 40.

The above process is repeated at predetermined intervals.

[0029]

The head of the guidance display range corresponds with the position of the playing game music at that time, the guidance display range by a predetermined amount is shifted backward from the beginning of the song for each processing.

Thus, timing guidance arrow mark 44L, to move 44D, 44U, gradually upward in accordance with the progress 44R is the song.

In this way, the timing guidance arrows 44L, 44D, 44U, and by displaying the 44R, the game screen 40, the player will be able to easily grasp the arrival status of the step timing.

[0030]

Here, I will describe the data that is stored in the CD-ROM25.

The CD-ROM25, for operating a home-use game machine 11 as a music game, a game program, various game effect sound data, in addition to various game image data, game music data is stored.

[0031]

Figure 4 is stored in the CD-ROM25, is a view for explaining the game music data corresponding to some game music.

As shown in the figure, game music data contains original music data, step data, timing tables, and background image data.

Original music data, for example, general popular music and the like as it is stored in the form of a predetermined stream data as original music.

CD-ROM reader 24 is reading the original music data in accordance with instructions from the CPU14, and subjected to data processing as necessary, it can be supplied directly to SPU20 without passing through the bus 12.

SPU20 can receives the data directly from the CD-ROM reader 24, and supplies it to the speaker 22 by D / A conversion.

[0032]

Step data is such that the player has to define the procedure to be operated in the case of reproducing the corresponding game music.

The step data is created according to the rhythm of the corresponding game music.

In addition, it is also possible to prepare a plurality of sets of step data for a single game music, and may be used depending on the difficulty or play mode, and the like.

Step data contains a plurality of data blocks corresponding to each bar of corresponding game music.

Each data block corresponds game a predetermined number of beats the measure of music, for example, when it is decomposed into four beats or eight beats, and include information controller

32 throat buttons to specify whether to be operated in what beat structure that has been.

[0033]

The timing table, has been prepared for timing adjustment of the corresponding game music and the step data, CPU14 is to identify the step data corresponding to the current playing position of the corresponding game music with reference to the timing table I have been to be able to.

On the other hand, background image data is for displaying a background image 46 of the example game screen 40 shown in FIG.

The background image data may be moving image data, and may be still image data.

Every game music, the background image has been selected to match the atmosphere, so that spice mood player visually.

[0034]

Here, I will explain the process of the game program executed by the home game machine 11.

Figure 5 is a flow diagram illustrating the processing of a game program stored in the CD-ROM25 (main game processing).

Player sets a CD-ROM25 in the CD-ROM reader 24, when turning on the power of the home game machine 11 is the operating system that is first stored in ROM28 is running, various initialization operations are performed.

In this case, parts necessary for immediate processing of the game program stored in the CD-ROM25 are loaded into RAM26.

In accordance with the game program, display of such as a game title is performed by the monitor 18, then, the main menu is displayed according to automatically or operation by the controller 32.

Here, game processing the player is shown in the figure when you select the main game is started.

[0035]

In this process, is first displayed play condition setting menu on the monitor 18.

Here, players set input number of players (for one person or for two people) and degree of difficulty and the like (play conditions) (S100).

Then, CPU14 will display the title of the plurality of pieces of music that can be played (music), prompting the selection to the player.

When the player selects a music by the controller 32 according to this, and determines it as playing music (S101).

Then, the load data related to the game music (S102).

Specifically, a group of data shown in Figure 4 is loaded.

Of these, about original music data is passed directly to the SPU20 from the CD-ROM reader 24, playback output is started immediately (S103).

In addition, other data is loaded into the RAM26.

[0036]

Then, CPU14 on the basis of the step data of the read game music data, is generated by the image data for step guidance as shown in FIG. 3, for example, to update the step guidance by outputting it to the monitor 18 (S104).

In this case, CPU14 is, the correspondence between the step data and the original music data, determines the timing table.

Step data and the timing table the song selected in S101, and corresponds to the degree of difficulty selected at S100 is used.

[0037]

Then, play evaluation process is performed (S105).

Figure 6 is a flow diagram illustrating the play evaluation process.

As shown in the figure, in the play evaluation process, first the current playing position and on the basis of the step data, it is determined whether the current playing position belonging to the evaluation period (S200).

The evaluation period is a period that collates the timing defined steps timing of the player to step data.

When a certain moment is defined in the step data as step timing, duration of the predetermined time width of the front and back is the evaluation period.

[0038]

If the current playing position belonging to the evaluation period, obtains the operation state of

the controller 32 (S201), and evaluates the player steps on the basis of it (S202).

That is, according to the step data, and that are in the current evaluation period, the direction button input area 34L, 34U, 34D, or is a step according to any of the 34R is known.

Therefore, where the direction button input area 34L which is evaluated, 34U, 34D, it is determined whether 34R is actually stepped on, that step timing is shifted much as those defined in step data I determine to have.

And, I want to give a high evaluation increases as the deviation is small.

For example, to provide the highest point when the deviation is zero, zero if the deviation is at a maximum, false if the direction button input area 34 is not depressed or if anything has stepped negative points as to.

Note that steps in accordance with a plurality of direction button input area 34 when were evaluated, it is evaluated in the same manner in every direction button input area 34.

Evaluation results with are stored in RAM26, is added to the score of the ever present score is stored in the RAM26, it is the total results.

The total score is displayed as the score 42 (S203).

At this time, the display state of dance gauge 50 is also updated.

That stretched right direction gauge bar if the higher evaluation is obtained, and reducing the gauge bar to the left if it was only a low evaluation reversed.

Moreover, a message 52 on the game screen 40 according to the evaluation obtained at step S202.

[0039]

Returning to Figure 5, then, CPU14 game play determines the termination conditions are satisfied (S106).

Specifically, and if the player start button input area 36A of the controller 32 is stepped, the game play is completed when the performance music has ended.

If the game play satisfies the end condition, performs a comprehensive evaluation of the entire play, based on the contents of RAM26, and displayed on the monitor 18 it as a play result (S107).

It should be noted that, if that was stepped on the start button input area 36A is a forced termination, the overall evaluation is canceled.

On the other hand, if the game play does not meet the termination condition, I the process returns to S104.

[0040]

Figure 7 is a diagram showing an example of a game screen displayed on the monitor 18 after game play.

Play result display screen 70 shown in the figure is a representation an overall rating for the entire play in the previous stage, in the upper left is displayed evaluated rank 72, Rating 76 is displayed below it, further thereunder score 78 is displayed.

Evaluation Rank 72 is intended to indicate a player steps (game operation) belongs to which rank (rank SS, S, A, B, C, D, either E), evaluation details 76 for the individual steps and illustrates the counting result of the evaluation (message 52).

Also, the score 78 is intended to indicate a score and total score at that stage.

These display is based on the play evaluation that was recorded in the RAM26.

[0041]

In addition, in the play result display screen 70, the character moving images 73 are represented in the same stage and evaluation rank 72, the character is dropped the star object, how is directing the numerical value of the draw count 74 increases depending on the number It has become so.

In other words, draw count value to the player according to the game device 10, evaluation No. 72 is adapted (collection point) is given, it become possible to obtain the card images (collection item) in exchange for draw count to have.

Draw the count value that the player currently possesses the memory card 33 when the draw count value is applied is set to be recorded.

The play result display screen 70, the draw count value is displayed initially as a draw count 74, then, how to be added to a number value corresponding to the evaluation rank 72 is represented in draw count 74 displays a moving image to have.

Thus, it is suitably directing how the draw count value player possesses according to evaluation rank 72 increases.

In addition, the newly draw the count value is added, draw the count value after the addition is overwritten stored in the memory card 33.

[0042]

When the player acquires a draw count value, it is able to migrate to the card selection screen by

a mode selection screen which is not shown.

Figure 8 is a view showing an example of card selection screen.

In the card selection screen 80, how the cards 64 that are inside out are arranged in an arc shape is represented by the card group image 82.

When the player steps on the circle button input area 38A in the state where the card selection screen 80 is displayed on the monitor 18, a single card, which is represented in the card group image 82 is first identification (eg, a high luminance display) Then, the identification display is adapted to move sequentially next card.

Thus, it is so to speak roulette display the 64 cards, for guiding the player to select what you like the 64 cards.

In this card selection screen 80, further look acquisition card display field 88 is provided at the bottom left.

Not acquisition card display column 88 is obtained by array displays a number of 1-64, the numbers corresponding to the already acquired cards are low brightness display, for the non-acquisition card in reverse so as to be high-brightness display there.

Thus, it is this way is informing the number of non-acquisition card to the player, to stimulate the collection desire of the player.

Here are low luminance display the number of the non-acquisition card, it has been adapted to notify the number of non-acquisition card indirectly to the player, and may be notified directly to the player the number of non-acquisition card (eg, "It is ○ sheets after.

", Etc.).

In this card selection screen 80, are card acquisition status display field 86 further displays the acquisition card number and residual draw count value in the lower center also provided.

Player by watching the same column, it is possible to know the remaining possession draw count value, can know the time acquired number of cards in the card selection screen 80.

[0043]

In the card selection screen 80 shown in Figure 8, with the card group image 82 is displayed roulette, when the player steps on the circle button input area 38A of the controller 32, the screen acquisition card display screen 80a shown in FIG. 9 switched.

In this acquisition card display screen 80a, card image 94 in which the player has acquired in exchange for a draw count value is displayed on the center, I have to get the serial number and the card image 94 to date of the card image 94 under the acquiring card images explanation field 92 indicating the number of times is displayed.

In addition, the player is in the case that has acquired the first of the card image, the "NEW !! on the right side of the acquisition card image description column 92

Message 90 is displayed with ".

[0044]

After acquiring the card images in exchange for draw count value as described above, later time, the player is adapted to be able to view the card image is already acquired.

Figure 10 is a diagram showing a collection screen to be displayed on the monitor 18 at this time.

In this collection screen 98, card image in which the player has already acquired in the list

display field 96 has been listed (thumbnail display), when the player adjust the cursor by operating the controller 32 to the desired card image, the card image enlarged display of I have come to be obtained in the enlarged display column 102 provided at the upper right of the screen.

In addition, the enlarged display is more detailed description column 100 on the lower side of the column 102 is provided, the serial number of the card image that is currently displayed in the enlarged display column 102 there, type (type), rarity (rare degree) and with the number of acquisition (number) is displayed, further Did you already get a what kind of in 64 types, the proportion of acquired type number for the total acquisition number (acquired type number) and achievement rate (total number of types) is to be displayed.

[0045]

Here, the card granting processing shown in FIGS. 8 and 9 I will be described.

Figure 11 is a flow diagram illustrating a card giving processing carried out in the game device 10.

The processing shown in the figure is realized by executing the CPU14 a program stored in the CD-ROM25.

[0046]

In the game apparatus 10, when the player selects the application of the card image in a predetermined mode selection screen (not shown), a monitor as an initial screen that roulette display has not been made yet of card selection screen 80 shown in Fig 18 is displayed in (S301).

Then, CPU14 monitors whether circle button input area 38A or cross button input area 38B of the controller 32 is depressed (S302).

If the cross button input area 38B is stepped on, it is determined to have canceled the application

of card images, and returns to the mode selection screen (not shown).

On the other hand, if the circle button input area 38A is stepped on, then draw the count value stored in the memory card 33 to determine whether it is 1 or more (S303).

Then, draw the count value I returns to step S301 if it is less than 1.

On the other hand, a random number is generated by a known algorithm if draw count value is 1 or more, to determine the serial number of the card image to be awarded to the player based on the random number and the predetermined given probability (S304).

That is, in the game apparatus 10, and so that to have a difference in scarcity of the card image and is set in advance given probability for each card image.

For example, to set about 1% grant probability is the card image, to generate a random number in the range 0-255, when the resultant random number is 0 to 3, to impart the card image to the player may be as.

This way to have a difference in the rarity of the card image, if there so that it is not only granted rare for card image, to stimulate the collection greed of a player, the motivation is that trying to further play the music-oriented game can be provided.

[0047]

The serial number of the card image is determined, and then initiate a transfer from the CD-ROM25 of the card image to the RAM26 in the background (S305).

Furthermore, it causes a roulette display card group image 82 (S306).

And, CPU14 controller 32 with a round button input area 38A monitors whether or stepped on (S307), until the round button input area 38A is depressed to continue the roulette display in this

state.

The circle button input area 38A is depressed during the roulette display, stop the roulette display, further CPU14 is to reduce the draw count value stored in the memory card 33 by 1 (S308).

Then, CPU14 is loaded into RAM26 card images has started to wait for the end in S305 (S309).

Or load the card image is completed while waiting, or earlier in if the load is already completed, it is stored in the CD-ROM25 in card images (format of the compressed image data loaded into RAM26, as it is to RAM25 has been loaded.

To solve the compression), and transfers to the VRAM which is provided in GPU16 (S310).

Then, it instructs the GPU16 to generate a frame image for outputting the acquisition card display screen 80a on the monitor 18 using the card image is transferred to the VRAM (S311).

Frame image generated in this manner, it is read from the VRAM at predetermined timing is output to the monitor 18, so that the acquisition card display screen 80a is display output.

In addition, between the card selection screen 80 shown in acquisition card display screen 80a and 8 shown in Figure 9, the player have been identified displayed in stepped's timing circle button input area 38A (high luminance display) and Card is drawn, it is I have to make the display moving images how to be flipped.

[0048]

The acquisition card display screen 80a is displayed, CPU14 the player to monitor whether stepped round button input area 38A of the controller 32 (S312).

When the circle button input area 38A is stepped on, it is determined that it is confirmed card

images the player acquired, another card is replenished to the card pile, it is to effect display how to be shuffled (S313).

[0049]

In the above card application treatment, the operation of the player based on independent random number and a pre-granted probability set for each card image, and has been granted the card images.

Therefore, it is possible to have a difference in scarcity of the card images.

Although such a card image is intended to be granted regardless of the operation of the player, as well as roulette display the card group image 82, the stops that roulette displayed in response to operation by the controller 32, at the timing Because though the player cards that have been identified display is to be directed as if obtained, it can be illusion as if you select themselves the card image.

Furthermore, prior to the roulette display the card group image 82, since it is adapted to determine the card image to be applied independently of the operation of the controller 32, the card image while the player is lost and trying to select the card it is possible to keep the load from the CD-ROM25, it can be displayed promptly acquired card image when the circle button input area 38A is stepped.

[0050]

According to the game device 10 described above, the player draw count value is given to the play result display screen 70 after the stage complete, the card image is given later time to the draw count value in exchange, the player collects card images If you try, it is possible to further to play the main game serving as music-oriented game.

[0051]

The present invention is not intended to be limited to the embodiments described above.

[0052]

For example, the above description but the present invention is for example performed using a home-use game machine 11, the present invention in the arcade game device is applicable as well.

In this case, by using a faster storage device in place of CD-ROM25, a monitor 18, a speaker 22 is preferably formed integrally.

[0053]

Also, the CD-ROM25 which stores a game program and game data in the above description it has been adapted for use in home-use game machine 11, it reads a personal computer or the like, the information storage medium storing a game program and game data, If its read processing capable computer based on the contents, it can also be used in any thing.

[0054]

Also, in the above description the present invention is applied to the game apparatus 10 which can enjoy the feeling of dancing, it is applicable to any other type of game.

[0055]

Also, the acquired card image in the above explanation was only is displayed on the monitor 18, it may be possible to print out the card image by connecting a printing device to the game apparatus 10.

Moreover, data or display the authorization code for each card image representing each card image as stored in the memory card 33, and even to exchange the card image or display the

authorization code collected the player of other game apparatus 10 good.

[0056]

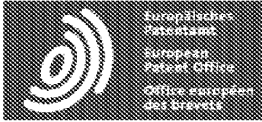
Furthermore, it has been to give the player a card image as a collection item in the above description, is not limited to still image data, such as a card image, and to employ video data and music data, etc., a variety of data as a collection item I can also.

[0057]

As has been described, according to the present invention, according to the present invention, since it is configured as a dominated game second game speak accidentally elements to constitute the first game a small game such as the chance elements Even if the player and can give the desired collection of the collection items, as a result, it is possible to increase the desire for re-challenge to the first game.

Also, once granted, storing a collection point, because it imparts a collection items based on the collection point, once it is possible to separate the first game and the second game.

Thus, without impairing the game of the first game, it can be difficult to get bored as a whole game, and it is possible to increase the desire for re-challenge to the first game.



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CLAIMS JP2001353371

[0001]

A first game providing means for providing a first game player, the game device comprising a second game providing means for providing a second game to the player, and the first game providing means in said first game and collection points applying means for applying a collection points to the player according to the game results, and collection point storage means for storing a collection points given by the collection point awarding means, the second game providing means, the collection point storage game apparatus characterized in that it comprises a collection item applying means for applying a collection item to the player based on a collection point and the random number stored in the unit.

[0002]

A game apparatus according to claim 1, game device characterized by further comprising a grant Already collection items output means for outputting the collection items that have already been granted by the collection item assigning means.

[0003]

A game apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the second game providing means further includes a non-acquired collection item number notifying means for notifying the player the number of collection items that have not been granted yet by the collection item providing means

game and wherein the.

[0004]

A game device according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the second game providing means, said grant Already collection items output means includes a list display output means that lists outputs the collection items that have already been granted game and wherein the.

[0005]

A game device according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the collection items applying means, and item given probability storage means for storing the items given probability set for each of a predetermined number of collection items, the items given probability The game apparatus characterized in that it comprises a collection item selection means for selecting those awarded to the player from among the predetermined number of collection items accordingly.

[0006]

A game device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the first game, the game device which is characterized in that it is a game which causes a step to the player at the timing that is the music.

[0007]

A first game providing step of providing a first game player, a second game providing step of providing a second game to the player, a control method of a game apparatus including, the first game providing step, the first and collection point giving step of imparting a collection points to the player according to the game results in the game, and collection point storage step of storing a collection points given by the collection point providing means in the storage means, the second game providing step , the control method of a game device is characterized in that it comprises a collection item imparting step of imparting the collection item to the player based on a collection point and the random number stored in the storage means.

[0008]

The was the first game providing means and the information storage medium storing a program for causing a computer to operate as a game device comprising a second game providing means for providing a second game to the player, a to provide a first game player Te, the first game providing means, and collection points applying means for applying a collection points to the player according to the game results in the first game, a collection point for storing a collection points given by the collection point providing means storage means, the second game providing means, information storage medium characterized in that it comprises a collection item applying means for applying a collection item to the player based on a collection point and the random number stored in the collection point storage means.

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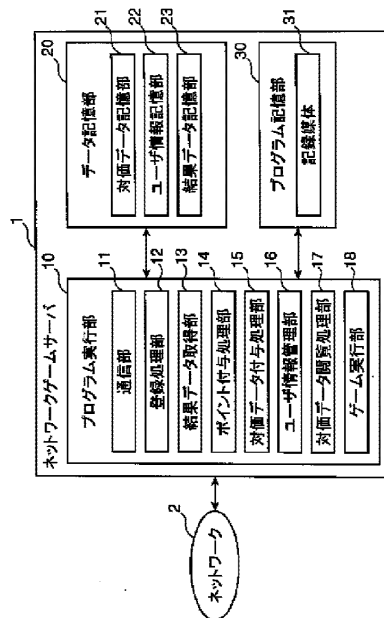
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(54) 【発明の名称】 ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置、ネットワークゲーム進行制御方法及びネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラム

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 ユーザに対価データの獲得を容易に行わせるとともに、ユーザに継続してゲームを行わせる。

【解決手段】 ネットワーク2を介してユーザが使用する端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行いながら所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるためのゲームを進行させるネットワークゲームサーバ1は、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させ、ユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与し、ユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを進行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置であって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、

前記ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、

前記ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段とを備えることを特徴とするネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置。

【請求項2】 前記ゲーム実行手段は、所定期間継続してユーザに第1のゲームを実行させるための第1のゲーム実行手段と、

前記第1のゲームより短時間でゲームが完結する第2のゲームをユーザに実行させるための第2のゲーム実行手段を含むことを特徴とする請求項1記載のネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置。

【請求項3】 前記第2のゲームは前記第1のゲームが実行不能実行不能期間において実行可能なゲームを含むことを特徴とする請求項2記載のネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置。

【請求項4】 前記第1のゲーム実行手段は、将来発生し得る現実の事象に対するユーザの予想内容に対応する予想データを前記端末装置から受け付け、受け付けた予想データを当該ユーザに関連付けて登録する予想データ登録手段と、

前記予想データに対して実際に発生した事象を結果データとして取得する結果データ取得手段とを含み、

前記ポイント付与手段は、前記予想データと結果データとが予め定めた条件を満たすとき、当該予想データに関連付けて登録されたユーザに所定のポイントを付与することを特徴とする請求項2又は3記載のネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置。

【請求項5】 ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を制御するネットワークゲーム進行制御方法であって、

前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行ステップと、

前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、前記ゲーム実行ステップにおいてユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与ステップと、

前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、前記ポイント付与ステップにおいてユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与ステップとを含むことを特徴とするネットワークゲーム進行制御方法。

【請求項6】 ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を制御するためのネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラムであって、

複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、

前記ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、

前記ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段として前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を機能させるためのネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラム。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、ネットワークを介して端末装置とネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置との間でデータの送受信を行うことで実行されるネットワークゲームに関するものである。

【0002】

【従来の技術】従来、インターネット等のネットワークを利用したネットワークゲームとして、例えばユーザが携帯電話機等の端末装置を用いてくじ引きゲームを行い、当たりが出た場合にアイドル歌手等の画像データ(対価データ)をユーザに付与するサービスを提供するものが知られている。

【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、上記くじ引きゲームは、当たり又は外れによる偶然性に基盤をおいた1つのゲームの結果に基づいてユーザに画像データを付与するものである。そのため、ユーザは、このゲームを行うことでしかゲームを行う目的である画像データの獲得ができず、画像データの獲得方法が制限されている。また、上記くじ引きゲームは、ユーザにとって、ゲーム進行度合いに応じて画像データの獲得率が向上する等の期待感が高まるというのではなく、ユーザに継続的にゲームを行わせることが困難である。

【0004】

本発明は、ユーザに対価データの獲得を容易に行わせることができるとともに、ユーザに継続的にゲームを行わせることができるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置、ネットワークゲーム進行制御方法及びネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラムを提供することを目的

とする。

【0005】

【課題を解決するための手段】請求項1記載の本発明は、ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを進行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置であって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、前記ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、前記ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを、ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段とを備えることを特徴とするネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置である。

【0006】請求項1記載の本発明に従えば、ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを進行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置は、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段とを備える。

【0007】すなわち、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させ、ユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントが付与され、付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データが当該ユーザに付与される。

【0008】このようにして、所定の価値を有する対価データを獲得するために必要とされるポイントの獲得が可能となるゲームとして複数のゲームが提供されるので、ユーザに対して対価データの獲得方法を複数提供することができる。

【0009】また、ユーザに対してゲームを行うことで直接対価データを付与するのではなく、対価データを獲得するために必要なポイントが付与されるので、ユーザは、ゲーム進行度合いに応じて対価データの獲得率が向上する等の期待感を高めていくことができる。

【0010】請求項2記載の発明は、前記ゲーム実行手段は、所定期間継続してユーザに第1のゲームを実行させるための第1のゲーム実行手段と、前記第1のゲームより短期間でゲームが完結する第2のゲームをユーザに実行させるための第2のゲーム実行手段とを含むことを特徴とする。

【0011】請求項2記載の発明に従えば、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置において、ゲーム実行手段は、所定期間継続してユーザに第1のゲームを実行させるため

の第1のゲーム実行手段と、第1のゲームより短期間でゲームが完結する第2のゲームをユーザに実行させるための第2のゲーム実行手段とを含む。

【0012】すなわち、ユーザは、所定期間継続して第1のゲームを行うことができるとともに、第1のゲームより短期間でゲームが完結する第2のゲームをも行うことができる。

【0013】このようにして、ユーザは、複数のゲームとして、所定期間継続して行う必要のある第1のゲームと第1のゲームより短期間でゲームが完結する第2のゲームとの2つの性格の異なるゲームを行うことが可能となるため、自分の好みや都合等に応じて所望するタイプのゲームを選ぶことができる。

【0014】請求項3記載の本発明は、前記第2のゲームは前記第1のゲームが実行不能な実行不能期間において実行可能なゲームを含むことを特徴とする。

【0015】請求項3記載の本発明に従えば、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置において、前記第2のゲームは前記第1のゲームが実行不能な実行不能期間において実行可能なゲームを含む。

【0016】すなわち、第1のゲームは、当該第1のゲームが実行不能な実行不能期間を有し、第2のゲームには、この実行不能期間において実行可能なゲームが含まれるので、ユーザは、複数のゲームとして、実行不能な期間を有する第1のゲームと、第1のゲームの実行不能な期間に実行可能な第2のゲームとを行うことが可能となる。

【0017】このようにして、ユーザは、実行不能な期間に第1のゲームの実行ができない場合には、第2のゲームを実行することでポイントを獲得することができるため、2つのゲームの中のうちの一方のゲームに他方のゲームにおけるゲーム実行不能な期間を補完する役割を持たせることができる。

【0018】請求項4記載の本発明は、前記第1のゲーム実行手段は、将来発生し得る現実の事象に対するユーザの予想内容に対応する予想データを前記端末装置から受け付け、受け付けた予想データを当該ユーザに関連付けて登録する予想データ登録手段と、前記予想データに対して実際に発生した事象を結果データとして取得する結果データ取得手段とを含み、前記ポイント付与手段は、前記予想データと結果データとが予め定めた条件を満たすとき、当該予想データに関連付けて登録されたユーザに所定のポイントを付与することを特徴とする。

【0019】請求項4記載の本発明に従えば、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置は、第1のゲーム実行手段は将来発生し得る現実の事象に対するユーザの予想内容に対応する予想データを端末装置から受け付け、受け付けた予想データを当該ユーザに関連付けて登録する予想データ登録手段と、登録された予想データに対して実際に発生した事象を結果データとして取得する結果データ取得

手段とを含み、ポイント付与手段は、登録された予想データと結果データとが予め定めた条件を満たすとき、当該予想データに関連付けて登録されたユーザに所定のポイントを付与する。

【0020】すなわち、将来発生し得る現実の事象に対するユーザの予想内容に対応する予想データを端末装置から受け付け、受け付けた予想データが当該ユーザに関連付けて登録され、登録された予想データに対して実際に発生した事象が結果データとして取得される。そして、登録された予想データと結果データとが予め定めた条件を満たすとき、当該予想データに関連付けて登録されたユーザに所定のポイントが付与される。

【0021】このようにして、端末装置を使用するユーザに対して将来発生し得る現実の事象に対する予想をゲームとして行わせているので、ユーザはゲーム空間等の仮想空間における人工的に作成された事象ではなく、人間が必ずしも支配することのできない現実世界における複雑かつ予想困難な事象に対してユーザが予想を行うことができる。

【0022】また、ユーザの予想が実際に発生した結果と予め定めた条件を満たす場合に、直接対価データを付与するのではなく、ポイントという増加又は減少可能な中間物を介在させて対価データを付与しているので、対価データの獲得に困難性を付加することができる。したがって、最終的に付与される対価データに対するユーザの価値観を高めることができるので、対価データの獲得に対するユーザの期待感を向上することができる。

【0023】さらに、ユーザは継続してゲームを行うことによって、ユーザの予想と実際に発生した結果とが予め定めた条件を満たすごとにポイントを増加させることができるので、ポイントを継続的に増加させて所望する対価データを獲得できる。

【0024】請求項4記載の本発明は、ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を制御するネットワークゲーム進行制御方法であって、前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行ステップと、前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、前記ゲーム実行ステップにおいてユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与ステップと、前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、前記ポイント付与ステップにおいてユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを、ユーザに付与する対価データ付与ステップとを含むことを特徴とするネットワークゲーム進行制御方法である。

【0025】請求項5記載の本発明に従えば、ネットワ

ークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を制御するネットワークゲーム進行制御方法は、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行ステップと、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、ゲーム実行ステップにおいてユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与ステップと、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置が、ポイント付与ステップにおいてユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを、ユーザに付与する対価データ付与ステップとを含む。

【0026】すなわち、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置によって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させ、ユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントが付与され、付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データが当該ユーザに付与される。

【0027】このようにして、所定の価値を有する対価データを獲得するために必要とされるポイントの獲得が可能なゲームとして複数のゲームが提供されるので、ユーザに対して対価データの獲得方法を複数提供することができる。

【0028】また、ユーザに対してゲームを行うことで直接対価データを付与するのではなく、対価データを獲得するために必要なポイントが付与されるので、ユーザは、ゲーム進行度合いに応じて対価データの獲得率が向上する等の期待感を高めていくことができる。

【0029】請求項6記載の本発明は、ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を制御するためのネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラムであって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、前記ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、前記ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段として前記ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を機能させるためのネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラムである。

【0030】請求項6記載の本発明に従えば、ネットワークを介してユーザが使用する複数の端末装置との間でデータの送受信を行い所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに獲得させるゲームを実行させるネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を用いてネットワークゲームの進行を

制御するためのネットワークゲーム進行制御プログラムであって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させるためのゲーム実行手段と、ゲーム実行手段によってユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントを付与するポイント付与手段と、ポイント付与手段によってユーザに付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データを当該ユーザに付与する対価データ付与手段としてネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置を機能させる。

【0031】すなわち、ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置によって、複数のゲームの中から1つのゲームをユーザに実行させ、ユーザが行ったゲームの結果に応じて当該ユーザに所定のポイントが付与され、付与されたポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データが当該ユーザに付与される。

【0032】このようにして、所定の価値を有する対価データを獲得するために必要とされるポイントの獲得が可能なゲームとして複数のゲームが提供されるので、ユーザに対して対価データの獲得方法を複数提供することができる。

【0033】また、ユーザに対してゲームを行うことで直接対価データを付与するのではなく、対価データを獲得するために必要なポイントが付与されるので、ユーザは、ゲーム進行度合いに応じて対価データの獲得率が向上する等の期待感を高めていくことができる。

【0034】

【発明の実施の形態】以下、本発明に係るネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置の一例であるネットワークゲームサーバ1を用いたネットワークゲームシステムについて適宜図面を参照しながら説明する。

【0035】なお、以下の説明では、ユーザにポイントを獲得させるための複数のゲームとして、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲーム(第1のゲーム)とカードめくりゲーム(第2のゲーム)を例にとり、これらのゲームをユーザに実行させることでネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う種々の処理等について適宜図面を参照しながら説明する。また、ユーザにポイントを獲得させるためのゲームは、3種類以上あってもよい。

【0036】特に、プロ野球の試合結果予想ゲームでは、プロ野球の試合結果を端末装置である携帯電話機等を使用するユーザに予想させることを想定して説明するが、本発明は、この例に特に限定されず、将来発生する現実の事象に対する予想として結果がネットワークゲームサーバ1(ネットワークゲーム用サーバ装置)によって取得できるものであれば、他の事象を予想させるようにしてもよい。例えば、スポーツ、格闘技、レース、新曲のヒットチャート予想等に適用することができ、特に勝敗や順位が結果として判明するものが好適であるが、気象データ、海洋データ、政治データ及び経済データ等の予想等にも適用可能である。

【0037】図1は、本発明に係るネットワークゲームサーバ1を用いたネットワークゲームシステムの一実施形態の全体概要図である。図1に示すネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ゲームの進行を制御するもので、ネットワーク2としてのインターネット上に設置されている。本実施形態では、ユーザが使用する端末装置として携帯電話機3が使用されており、ネットワーク2への接続のためのプロバイダとして機能する所定の移動体通信会社4内に設置されたサーバを介してネットワーク2に接続して携帯電話機3とネットワークゲームサーバ1との通信を可能にしている。

【0038】なお、端末装置は、上記実施形態に限定されず、携帯電話機3に接続されたPDA5等を用いてもよく、また、同種の通信方式を取る端末装置であれば機種及びそれらが登録された移動体通信会社を問わず使用可能である。

【0039】次に、ネットワークゲームサーバ1について詳細に説明する。ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、WWサーバ装置等から構成されており、ネットワーク2を介してユーザに使用される携帯電話機3との間で種々のデータの送受信を行い、ゲームの進行を管理するものである。

【0040】図2は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1の構成を示す機能ブロック図である。図2に示すように、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、機能的には、プログラム実行部10、データ記憶部20及びプログラム記憶部30を含む。プログラム実行部10は、機能的には、通信部11、登録処理部12、結果データ取得部13、ポイント付与処理部14、対価データ付与処理部15、ユーザ情報管理部16、対価データ閲覧処理部17及びゲーム実行部18を含む。データ記憶部20は、対価データ記憶部21、ユーザ情報記憶部22及び結果データ記憶部23を含む。プログラム記憶部30は、コンピュータ読み取り可能な記録媒体31を含む。

【0041】プログラム実行部10は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1のCPU(Central Processing Unit)等から構成され、当該CPUがプログラム記憶部30に含まれる記録媒体31に記憶されている種々のプログラムを読み出して実行することによって、通信部11、登録処理部12、結果データ取得部13、ポイント加算処理部14、対価データ付与処理部15、ユーザ情報管理部16、対価データ閲覧処理部17及びゲーム実行部18として機能する。

【0042】通信部11は、CPU等が通信プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。通信部11は、携帯電話機3との間で種々のデータの送受信を行う際に必要な処理を行うものである。この通信部11は、携帯電話機3からユーザが予想したプロ野球チームの試合結果を予想データとして受け付ける機能と、携帯電話機3から対価データ(カード画像)の付与を要求する対価デー

タ付与要求を受け付ける機能と、携帯電話機3から後述するユーザ情報管理部16によって管理されている対価データからこの対価データに対応して定められたポイントへの交換を要求するポイント交換要求を受け付ける機能と、携帯電話機3からユーザに付与された対価データの閲覧要求を受け付ける機能とを有する。

【0043】また、この通信部11は、後述するユーザ情報管理部16によって携帯電話機3を使用するユーザが所定値以上のポイントを獲得していると判断された場合(所定条件を満たす場合)、このポイントと対価データとの交換が可能であることを携帯電話機3に通知する機能を有する。

【0044】さらに、この通信部11は、携帯電話機3からの対価データの閲覧要求に対応する対価データを閲覧可能に提供する機能を有する。

【0045】登録処理部12は、CPU等が登録処理プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。携帯電話機3を使用するユーザに関する情報を後述するユーザ情報記憶部22に登録(変更・更新登録を含む)するものである。この登録処理部12は、携帯電話機3から通信部11によって受け付けたプロ野球球団の勝敗予想データを携帯電話機3を使用するユーザに関連付けて登録する機能(予想データ登録手段)を有する。また、登録処理部12は、後述するゲーム実行部18の一部として機能する。ユーザ情報としては、詳しくは後述するが、ニックネーム、応援球団、ライバル球団、メールアドレス及びパスワードを含む。

【0046】結果データ取得部13は、CPU等が結果データ取得プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。結果データ取得部13は、ネットワーク2を介してユーザの予想内容に対応する予想データに対して現実に発生した結果を結果データとして取得する機能(結果データ取得手段)を有する。また、結果データ取得部13は、後述するゲーム実行部18の一部として機能する。

【0047】ポイント付与処理部14は、CPU等がポイント付与プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。ポイント付与処理部14は、後述するゲーム実行部18によって、プログラム記憶部30に含まれている記録媒体31に記憶されている複数のゲームプログラムのうちの1つのゲームプログラムによって実行可能なゲームを携帯電話機3を使用するユーザに実行させ、ユーザが行ったゲームの結果に対応して定められたポイントユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる(付与する)ものである。

【0048】このポイント付与処理部14は、結果データ取得部13によって取得した結果データとユーザによる予想データとを照合し、双方のデータが所定の条件を満たしたとき、予想を行ったユーザに対して予め定められたポイントユーザ情報記憶部23に記憶させる機能

(ポイント付与手段)を有するとともに、携帯電話機3からのポイント交換要求に応じて後述するユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶されている対価データを消去するとともに、この対価データに対応して定められたポイントユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる機能を有する。

【0049】対価データ付与処理部15は、CPU等が対価データ付与プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。対価データ付与処理部15は、ポイントに応じて所定の価値を有する対価データをユーザに付与する機能(対価データ付与手段)を有する。この対価データ付与処理部15は、通信部11によって携帯電話機3から受け付けた対価データ付与要求(カード画像の付与要求)に応じた対価データをユーザ情報管理部16によって管理されているユーザ情報に関連付けてユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる機能を有する。また、この対価データ付与処理部15は、付与された対価データに対応して定められたポイントを後述するユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶されている獲得ポイントから減算処理を行い、ユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる機能を有する。

【0050】また、この対価データ付与処理部15は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって管理されているポイントが所定条件を満たしており、かつ所定のポイントと対価データとの交換に同意する旨の通知を携帯電話機3から受信した場合、対価データ記憶部21に記憶されている対価データの中から無作為に選出した対価データをユーザに関連付けてユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる機能を有する。

【0051】ユーザ情報管理部16は、CPU等がユーザ情報管理プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。ユーザ情報管理部16は、後述するユーザ情報記憶部22内のユーザが獲得したポイント及び対価データを携帯電話機3を使用するユーザに関連付けて管理するものである。また、このユーザ情報管理部16は、携帯電話機3からアクセスを受けた場合、携帯電話機3を使用するユーザが既に登録されているか否かを判断する機能を有する。

【0052】対価データ閲覧処理部17は、CPU等が対価データ閲覧処理プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。対価データ閲覧処理部17は、携帯電話機3から対価データ付与処理部15によって付与された対価データの閲覧要求を受けた場合、この対価データが携帯電話機3側で複製不能となるように所定のデータ処理を行うものである。

【0053】ゲーム実行部18は、CPU等がゲーム実行プログラム等を実行することによって実現される。ゲーム実行部18は、プログラム記憶部30に含まれる記録媒体31に記憶されている複数のゲームプログラムの中から1つのゲームプログラムによって実行可能なゲームをユーザに実行させるものである。ゲーム実行部18は、所定期間継続してユーザにプロ野球試合結果予想ゲ

ームを実行させる機能(第1のゲーム実行手段)及びプロ野球試合結果予想ゲームより短時間でゲームが完結するカードめくりゲームをユーザに実行させる機能(第2のゲーム実行手段)を有する。また、ゲーム実行部18は、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲームプログラムを実行する場合、上述した登録処理部12及び結果データ処理部13を用いてプロ野球試合結果予想ゲームを実行する。

【0054】本実施形態において、複数のゲームプログラムとして、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲームをユーザに実行させるためのプログラムと、カードめくりゲームをユーザに実行させるためのプログラムとがプログラム記憶部30の記憶媒体31に含まれている。

【0055】データ記憶部20は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1のハードディスク等の不揮発性メモリ等から構成され、通信部11、登録処理部12、結果データ取得部13、ポイント付与処理部14、対価データ付与処理部15、ユーザ情報管理部16、対価データ閲覧処理部17及びゲーム実行部18が種々の処理を行うために必要なデータを記憶する。

【0056】対価データ記憶部21は、携帯電話機3に対し閲覧提供するための対価データ(カード画像)を対応するポイントに関連付けて記憶するものである。対価データ記憶部21は、対価データをチーム毎・カードランク毎に記憶可能に構成されている。

【0057】ユーザ情報記憶部22は、登録処理部12によって登録された携帯電話機3を使用するユーザに関する情報を記憶するとともに、ゲーム進行過程において、当該ユーザが獲得したポイント及び対価データを関連付けて記憶するものである。

【0058】結果データ記憶部23は、結果データ取得部13によって取得された結果データを記憶するものである。結果データ記憶部23は、ユーザの応援球団及びライバル球団に該当するプロ野球の試合結果データを累積して記憶可能に構成されている。

【0059】次に、ユーザに使用される携帯電話機3(端末装置)について説明する。

【0060】図3は、本実施形態において適用される携帯電話機のブロック図を示すもので、特に、本発明に必要な機能のみを抽出して説明する。携帯電話機3は各部を統括して制御するコンピュータからなる制御部300を備えると共に、この制御部300は、操作部材としてのキー群301、モニタ302に表示される画像データを記憶するVRAM302a、アンテナ303、入力データや処理データを一時的に保存するRAM304及び制御プログラム等を記憶したROM305と接続されて構成されている。

【0061】キー群301は、電話番号入力用のテンキー、モニタ302に表示されるカーソルの移動や意思決定用の機能キー及び回線オンオフ用キー等を有する。また機能キーの設定に応じてテンキーを用いて文字入力

可能に構成され、これによりメールアドレスの入力、メールアドレスの入力が可能に構成されている。

【0062】VRAM302aは、液晶表示装置等から構成されるモニタ302に表示する画面を一時的に記憶するもので、VRAM302aに書き込まれた内容を所定の周期で繰り返しモニタ302に読み出して表示することで、残像現象によって静止画として視認し得るようになるものである。

【0063】制御部300を構成する表示処理部306～送受信制御部308について説明する。表示処理部306は入力操作の確認的表示、各種の入力ガイド画面の表示や画像データ等をモニタに表示させるものである。また、メールの内容を表示させたりするものである。この表示処理部306は、少なくとも1画面分以上の画像データを記憶する容量を有し、例えばモニタ302に画像の一部しか表示されない態様では、キー群301の特定キーの操作に応じて画像を上下等にスクロール処理させるようにして、画像全体を見られるように手当てしている。キー入力処理部307は、キー群301の操作に応じた情報を作成するものである。

【0064】送受信制御部308は、無線公衆回線からの着信、送信の回線制御及び音声データの送受信の他、インターネット等のネットワークを経由するなどして用いられる電子メールにおけるデータ送受信を処理するもので、送受信データはアンテナ306を介して授受される。携帯電話機3で送受される画像データは例えばGIF形式で圧縮された後、パケットで通信される。

【0065】つづいて、フローチャート等を使ってネットワークゲームサーバ1により行われる処理手順について説明する。

【0066】ここで、ネットワークゲームサーバ1により行われる処理手順の説明に先だてて本実施形態におけるゲーム進行の概要について説明する。本実施形態におけるゲーム進行の概要は、メインゲームとしてプロ野球の試合結果を予想するゲームとミニゲームとなるカードめくりゲームとをユーザが行うことでポイントを蓄積していき、このポイントに応じてユーザがプロ野球選手等のカード画像を取得(獲得)していくというものである。また、ユーザは、取得したプロ野球選手等のカード画像データとポイントとを交換することも可能である。また、ユーザは、いつでも取得したプロ野球選手のカード画像データを携帯電話機3のモニタ等で電子アルバムのように閲覧することが可能である。

【0067】プロ野球の試合結果予想ゲームとは、ゲームへの参加を希望するユーザが、実際のプロ野球の試合結果に対する予想を立てて登録を行う。そして、実際のプロ野球の試合が行われた後に試合結果が出ると、予想登録を行ったユーザに対し、試合結果に応じてポイントを付与される。ユーザは、予想的中を繰り返していくことでポイントが累積して溜めていき、このポイントに

じてユーザがプロ野球選手等のカード画像(対価データ)を取得していくというものである。また、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲームは、所定期間継続してユーザに実行させることでユーザにポイントを獲得させるゲームである。

【0068】カードめくりゲームとは、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲームよりも短期間でゲームが完結するものであり、ユーザが、携帯電話機3等のモニタ上に表示される画面上のカードを1枚ずつ選択して得たポイントを蓄積していき、プロ野球選手等のカード画像の取得するためのポイント獲得のための補充方法として機能するものである。また、カードめくりゲームとは、プロ野球試合結果予想ゲームよりも短期間でゲームが完結するものである。

【0069】なお、本実施形態において、プロ野球の試合結果予想ゲームは実際にプロ野球が行われているシーズン中にユーザが行うゲームであり、カードめくりゲームは、プロ野球が行われていないシーズンオフに行われるか又は試合のない日等にユーザが行うゲームであることを想定している。ただ、所定の条件(例えば1日にミニゲームは1回のみ等の条件)を設けることで、これらの2つのゲームを同時にユーザが行えるようにしてもよい。

【0070】まず、ユーザ登録処理からメニュー選択に対する処理までのネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う処理手順について説明する。

【0071】図4は、ユーザ登録処理からメニューの選択に対する処理までのネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う処理手順の一例を示すフローチャートである。図5は、携帯電話機3において表示されるユーザ登録処理に伴う画面変遷図の一例である。以下、図4及び図5を適宜参照しながら説明を行なう。なお、以下参照する図面5、図8、図10、図12、図14及び図16において示されている各画面間を結ぶ矢印は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う処理に応じて携帯電話機3において表示される画面が時系列で次の画面に移っていくことを示すものである。

【0072】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、携帯電話機3からアクセスを受けると、図5に示すフロントページ画面100を表示するためのデータ携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST1)、これを表示させる。

【0073】図5に示すように、フロントページ画面100は、本ゲームのタイトル画像を表示するタイトル画像表示部101と、「①ご案内」、「②マイメニュー登録」の2つからメニューを選択するメニュー選択部102とを含んで構成されている。

【0074】ゲーム参加を希望するユーザによって使用される携帯電話機3からフロントページ画面100の「②マイメニュー登録」が選択されたのを受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図5に示すマイメニュー登録画面110を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送

信し(ステップST2)、これを表示させる。

【0075】図5に示すように、マイメニュー登録画面110は、マイメニュー登録に関するガイダンスを表示するガイダンス表示部111と、「利用規約を読む」、「了承する」及び「戻る」の3つのメニューから1つのメニューを選択するメニュー選択部112とを含んで構成されている。

【0076】マイメニュー登録画面110のメニュー選択部112の3つのメニューから「了承する」が選択されたことを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図5に示す利用者情報を入力するための利用者情報画面120を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST3)、これを表示させる。

【0077】図5に示すように、利用者情報画面120は、ユーザ情報として、「ニックネーム」122、「応援球団」123、「ライバル球団」124及び「メールアドレス」125の4つを入力するための入力部121と、上記入力部121の項目の入力の確認後にマイメニュー登録を指示を行うための「登録」ボタン126を含んで構成されている。

【0078】入力部121において、「ニックネーム」122は、本ゲーム空間内でのユーザのニックネームである。本実施形態において、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が、ユーザ情報管理部16により、各ユーザ情報を管理しているため、他のユーザと同じニックネームは登録できない。従って、既に他のユーザが使用しているニックネームについては使用することができないこととなっている。

【0079】「応援球団」123とは、各ユーザが登録したプロ野球の応援球団のことであり、本実施形態において、この応援球団が勝利することで所定のポイントを付与される。なお、応援球団は、他のユーザと同じ応援球団となってもよい。「ライバル球団」124とは、各ユーザが登録したプロ野球のライバル球団であり、本実施形態において、このライバル球団が負けることで所定のポイントを付与される。なお、応援球団と同様に、他のユーザと同じライバル球団となってもよい。

【0080】このように、勝敗予想に対する現実の試合結果によって応援球団の勝敗予想が外れたとしても、ライバル球団の勝敗予想を当てることによってユーザはポイントの付与を受けることが可能となるので、弱い応援球団を応援するユーザに対してもポイントを取得する機会を十分に付与することができるのと同時に、ユーザの関心事とゲームの内容を連動させることができるので、ゲームの興趣性をより向上することができる。

【0081】「メールアドレス」125とは、ユーザの使用される携帯電話機3のメールアドレスである。例えばネットワークゲームサーバ1が携帯電話機3に種々のデータを送信する際に利用されるものである。

【0082】利用者情報画面120の入力部121に所

定の入力事項が入力され、「登録」ボタン126が押されたのを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、登録処理部12によって、入力事項が正しいか否かの判断を行う(ステップST4)。ここで、入力事項の確認とは、応援球団とライバル球団とが同じである場合、ニックネームが既に登録済みの場合の確認等である。

【0083】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、登録処理部12によって、入力事項が正しいと判断しなかった場合(ステップST4でNO)、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、再入力を促す画面(図示せず)を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し、これを表示させ、ステップST3に戻る。また、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、登録処理部12によって、入力事項が正しいと判断した場合(ステップST4でYES)、図5に示すユーザにパスワードを入力させるためのパスワード入力画面130を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST5)、これを表示させる。

【0084】図5に示すように、パスワード入力画面130は、本ゲームを行う場合に使用されるユーザのパスワードを入力するための入力部131と、入力したパスワードを確定させる「決定」ボタン132とを含んで構成されている。

【0085】パスワード入力画面130にパスワードが入力されたデータを携帯電話機3から受信すると、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、登録処理部12によって、携帯電話機3を使用するユーザのユーザ登録を行う(ステップST6)。ユーザ登録されると、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図5に示すユーザが各種メニューを選択するためのメニュー画面200を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST7)、これを表示させる。

【0086】図5に示すように、メニュー画面200は、ユーザの応援チームのマーク画像等を表示するマーク画像表示部201と、例えば12のメニューからユーザの所望のメニューを選択するメニュー選択部202を含んで構成されている。

【0087】メニュー画面200のメニュー選択部202のメニューが選択されたのを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、この選択された各メニューに関する処理を行う(ステップST8)。

【0088】次に、予想データに対する結果データの取得からポイント増加をユーザに通知するまでのネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う処理手順について説明する。

【0089】図6は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う予想データに対する結果データの取得に基づく処理手順の一例を示すフローチャートである。

【0090】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、結果データ取得部13によって、各ユーザの応援球団及びライバル球団となる球団ごとの勝敗に関する勝敗結果データを

取得する(ステップST11)。

【0091】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ポイント付与処理部14によって、ユーザ情報管理部16によって管理されている各ユーザ毎の応援球団及びライバル球団の勝敗予想データと取得した試合結果データとを照合し、勝敗予想データと試合結果データとが一致したものに対してポイント増加処理を行い、ユーザ情報記憶部22に記憶させる(ステップST12)。

【0092】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、通信部11によって、取得した試合結果データを携帯電話機3に送信する(ステップST13)。ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ポイント付与処理部14によってポイント増加処理が行われた場合、通信部11により、ポイント増加結果画面(図示せず)を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST14)、これを表示させる。

【0093】つづいて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う対価データの付与処理に基づく処理手順について説明する。

【0094】図7は、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が行う対価データの付与処理に基づく処理手順の一例を示すフローチャートである。図8は、携帯電話機3において表示される対価データの付与処理に伴う画面変遷図の一例である。以下、図7及び図8を適宜参照しながら説明を行なう。

【0095】ユーザによって使用される携帯電話機3からのアクセスを受けると、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって、携帯電話機3を使用するユーザが既にユーザ登録されているか否かを判断する(ステップST21)。ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって、ユーザ登録されていないと判断した場合(ステップST21でNO)、例えばユーザ登録を行う旨の通知画面(図示せず)を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し、一連の処理を終了する。

【0096】また、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって、ユーザ登録されていると判断した場合(ステップST21でYES)、図8に示すユーザが各種メニューを選択するためのメニュー画面200を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST22)、これを表示させる。図8に示すように、メニュー画面200は、上述した図5に示すメニュー画面200と同様の画面となるため、ここでは説明を省略する。

【0097】携帯電話機3からメニュー画面200のメニュー選択部202のメニューから「①カードGET!」が選択されたことを受け、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図8に示すカードGET画面400を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST23)、これを表示させる。

【0098】図8に示すように、カードGET画面40

0は、現在選択されているメニューを表示する選択メニュー表示部401と、ユーザの現在の獲得ポイントを表わすポイント表示部402と、「カードGET!」の内容を簡単に説明したガイド部403と、カードGETの実行を行うための「カードを引く」ボタン404とを含んで構成されている。

【0099】メニュー画面400の「カードを引く」で示される実行ボタン404が押されたことを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、通信部11によって、カードGETの実行指示を携帯電話機3から受信する(ステップST24)。ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって、ユーザの現在獲得しているポイントをユーザ情報記憶部22から読み出し、所定ポイント以上あるか否かを判断する(ステップST25)。

【0100】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16により、ユーザの現在のポイントが所定ポイントに達していないと判断した場合(ステップST25でNO)、通信部11により、カード購入不可画面(図示せず)を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST26)、これを表示させ、一連の処理を終了する。

【0101】また、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、ユーザ情報管理部16によって、ユーザの現在のポイントが所定ポイント以上あると判断した場合(ステップST25でYES)、対価データ付与処理部15によって、対価データ記憶部21に記憶されている対価データの中からランダムに1つの対価データを抽出し、抽出した対価データをユーザ情報記憶部22にユーザに関連付けて記憶し、付与した対価データに対応して定められたポイントをユーザ情報記憶部22から減算する(ステップST27)。

【0102】ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、対価データ閲覧処理部17によって、図8に示す抽出した対価データが携帯電話機3側で閲覧可能なように処理したカードGET実行後の獲得カード画像画面410(カード購入処理後画面)を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST28)、これを表示させる。

【0103】なお、ネットワークゲームサーバ1が、獲得カード画像画面(カード購入処理後画面)410を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信する場合、対価データ閲覧処理部17によって、カード画像が携帯電話機3側で複製不能となるように所定のデータ処理を行った上で携帯電話機3に送信する。以下、カード画像を含む画面を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信する際には、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、対価データ閲覧処理部17によって、カード画像が携帯電話機3側で複製不能となるように所定のデータ処理を行った上でカード画像を含む画面を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信する。従って、ユーザ側でのカード画像の

複製等のユーザの不正行為を防止することができるとともに、ユーザは所望する画像データを閲覧することができるので、ユーザのカード画像に対する所有意識を満足させながら、ゲームを円滑に運営することができる。

【0104】図8に示すように、獲得カード画像表示画面410は、現在選択されているメニューを表示する選択メニュー表示部411と、取得したカード画像を表示するカード画像表示部412と、取得したカード画像難度表示部413と、取得したカード画像の識別番号とカードGET後のユーザのポイント残高を表示するゲーム状況表示部414と、「コレクション」及び「戻る」の2つのメニューから1つのメニューを選択するメニュー選択部415とを含んで構成されている。

【0105】カード画像取得難度表示部413は、例えば画像表示部412に表示されているカード画像の右上に表示されている星印2つ等によって示され、この画像データの取得難度を示すものである。例えば星印が1つの場合が、ノーマルカードであり、星印が2つの場合が、レアカードであり、星印が3つの場合が、ウルトラレアカードであることを示している。星印の数が多いほど、ユーザにとって獲得が困難であるカードであることを示している。各カードのランクも3ランクに限定されず、それ以上又はそれ以下であってもよい。

【0106】なお、カード画像の獲得困難度(レア度)を表わすものは上記カード画像取得難度表示部413が示すマーク等に限定されるのではなく、例えば他のマークやカード画像表示部412の背景色を変える等によるものであってもよい。また、ユーザが携帯電話機3のモニタ等から確認できるものであれば、マークのカード画像上での位置も限定されない。

【0107】このように、数量の少ないすなわちレアなカード画像を獲得することに対する困難性が味わうことができるので、ゲームの興趣性をより向上することができるとともに、ユーザにゲームを継続して行う動機付けを与えることができるので、ゲームを継続して円滑に運営することができる。

【0108】ユーザがさらにカード画像獲得のためカードGETを行う場合には、図8に示す獲得カード画像表示画面410のメニュー選択部415の「戻る」ボタンが押されたことを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図8に示すカードGET画面400を表示するためのデータを携帯電話機3に送信し(ステップST29でYES)、これを表示させ、ステップST23に戻り同じ手順を繰り返す。また、再度カードGETを行わない場合には、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、一連の処理を終了する。

【0109】なお、図8に示す獲得カード画像表示画面410のメニュー選択部415の「コレクション」ボタンが選択されたことを携帯電話機3から受けて、ネットワークゲームサーバ1は、図8に示すカードアルバム画面