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(54) **BACK LIGHT UNIT AND LIQUID CRYSTAL
DISPLAY DEVICE AND GAME MACHINE
INCLUDING THE SAME**

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USPC **349/64; 349/86**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

USPC 349/62, 63, 65, 86, 88, 64; 463/32

See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A game machine includes: a liquid crystal display including a liquid crystal panel and a back light unit disposed; and at least one reel which is disposed behind the back light unit and on which a plurality of symbols are disposed. The back light unit includes: a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each other, transparent electrodes being formed on corresponding predetermined areas the transparent plates; a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in a space between the transparent plates; and a light source module including a frame which is disposed behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame corresponding to the predetermined area being empty or transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of light sources which is mounted to the frame to be disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the transparent plates.

12 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets

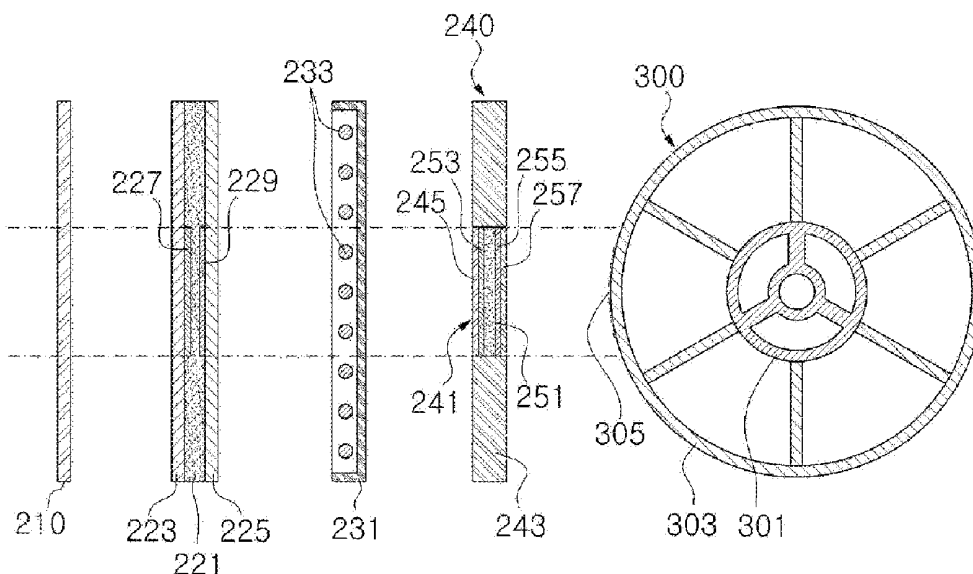


FIG. 1

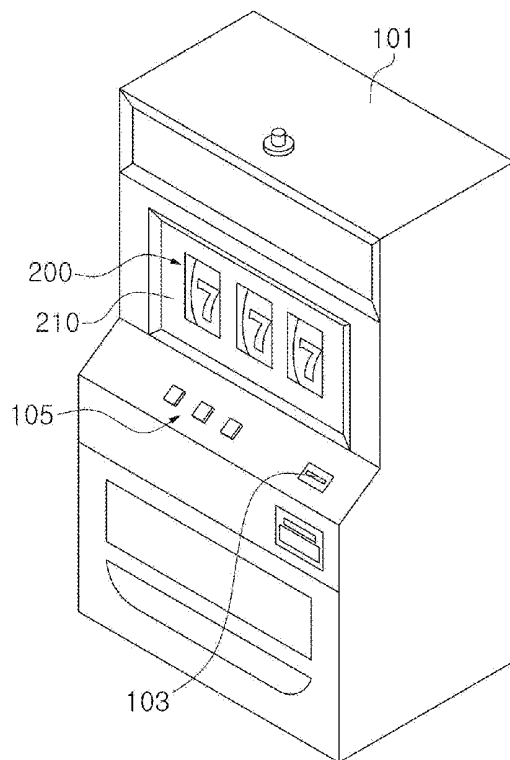


FIG. 2

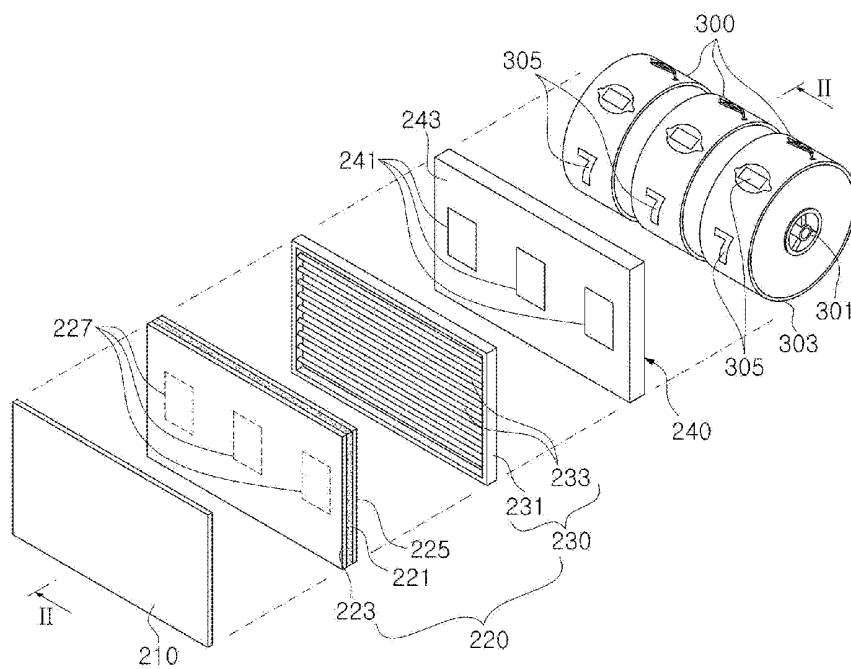


FIG. 3

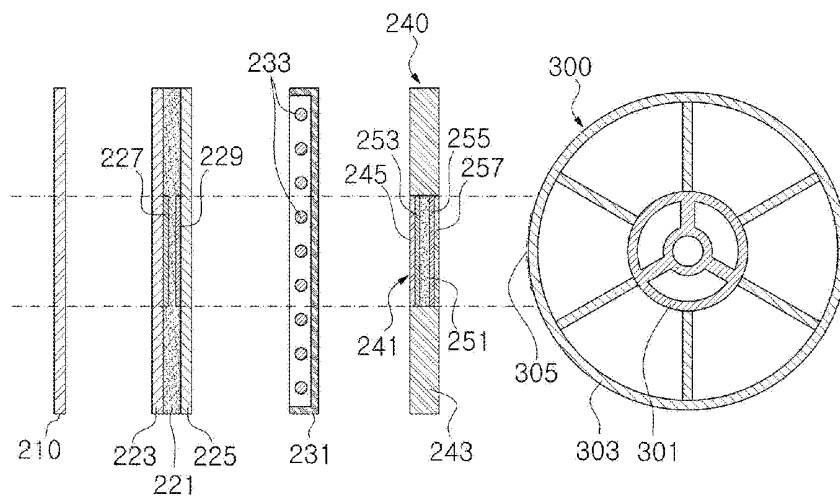


FIG. 4

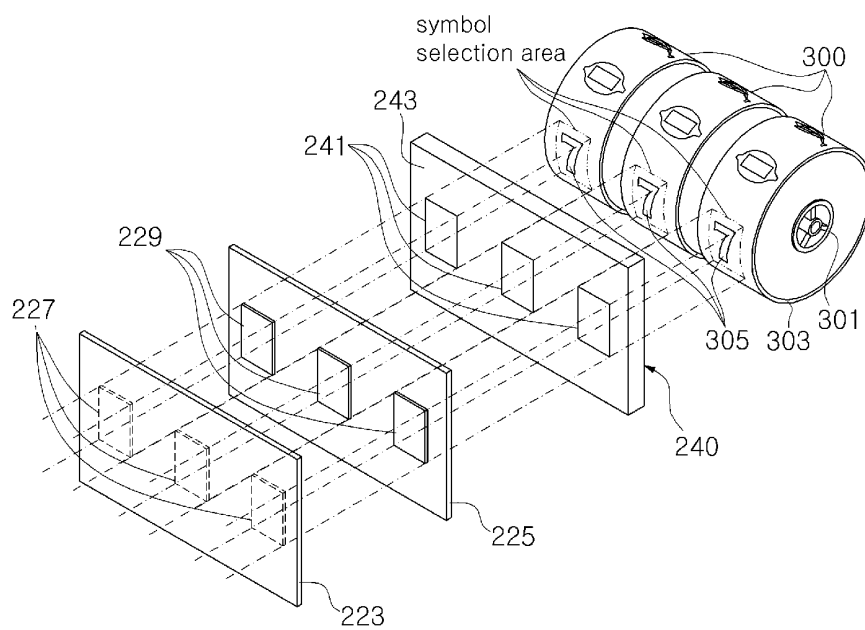
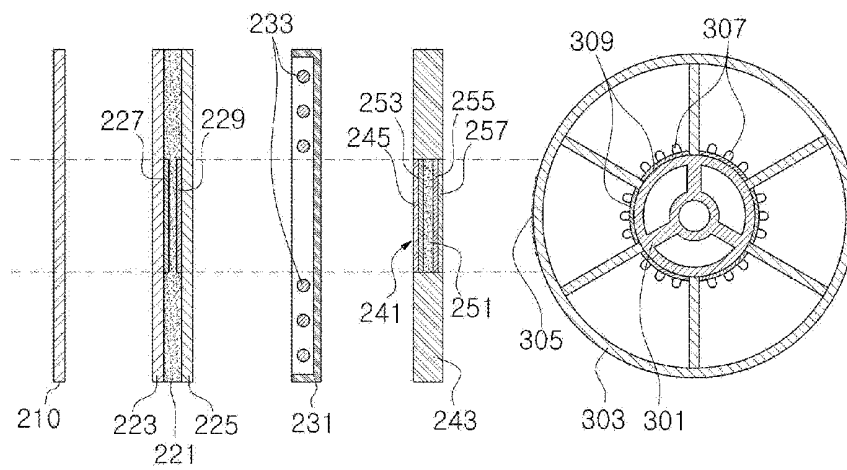


FIG. 5



BACK LIGHT UNIT AND LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY DEVICE AND GAME MACHINE INCLUDING THE SAME

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims priority to and the benefit of Korean Patent Application No. 10-2008-0053584 filed in the Korean Intellectual Property Office on Jun. 9, 2008, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a back light unit and a liquid crystal display and a game machine including the same. More particularly, the present invention relates to a back light unit which can make a predetermined area transparent and a liquid crystal display and a game machine including the same.

BACKGROUND ART

With increase of needs for various games, various game machines have been developed, and as an example, a slot machine which is used for casino game is one of game machines.

A game machine such a slot machine is provided with a plurality of reels on which symbols such as pictures or numbers are displayed, and takes a game rule that a game result is determined by combination of symbols displayed on the reels.

Recently, a liquid crystal display panel is used in a game machine having such a reel, and information for proceeding game or advertisement is displayed on the liquid crystal display panel.

A liquid crystal display panel is disposed in front of the reel, and in this case, symbols displayed on the reel which is disposed behind the liquid crystal display panel can be seen from the front of the liquid crystal display panel. For this function, several methods have been suggested. For example, in Korea Patent Publication No. 10-2007-0055766 (title: game machine having display screen), a light guide plate of a back light unit of a liquid crystal display is made of transparent or translucent material and scratch or dot pattern is not formed on area of the light guide plate corresponding to symbol display area of the reel so that symbols of the reel can be seen from the front of the liquid crystal display through the area where the pattern is not formed, and in Korea Patent Publication No. 10-2006-0049328 (title: game machine), area of a diffuse sheet, a light guide plate, and a reflector of a back light unit corresponding to symbol display area of the reel is removed and thus symbols of the reel can be seen from the front of the liquid crystal display.

However, a method suggested in Korea Patent Publication No. 10-2007-0055766 has a problem in that the area of the light guide plate on which scratch or dot pattern is not formed may deteriorate the function of uniform light penetration of the light guide plate so as to deteriorate light efficiency of the back light unit. And, a method suggested in Korea Patent Publication No. 10-2006-0049328 has a problem in that images cannot be displayed on openings existed in the diffuse sheet, a light guide plate and a reflector and images cannot be displayed on the openings when game using the reel is not performed.

Technical Problem

The present invention has been made in an effort to provide a back light unit which can convert a predetermined area to a transparent state, and a liquid crystal display and a game machine including the same.

Technical Solution

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention provides a back light unit for a liquid crystal display including: a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each other, transparent electrodes being formed on corresponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing each other of the transparent plates; a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in a space between the transparent plates and is formed by polymer dispersed liquid crystal; and a light source module including a frame which is disposed behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame corresponding to the predetermined area being empty or transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of light sources which is mounted to the frame to be disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the transparent plates.

The plurality of light sources may be equidistantly disposed.

The back light unit may further include a light switch plate which is disposed behind the light source module, a light source member which can be selectively converted into a transparent state being disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the light switch plate, and the other area of the light switch plate being made of nontransparent material.

The light switch member may be a TN liquid crystal panel which can be selectively converted into a transparent state.

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention provides a liquid crystal display including: the above-described back light unit; and a liquid crystal panel disposed at one side of the transparent plates which is opposite to a side where the light source module is disposed.

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention provides a game machine including: a liquid crystal display including a liquid crystal panel and a back light unit disposed behind the liquid crystal panel; and at least one reel which is disposed behind the back light unit and on which a plurality of symbols are disposed. The back light unit includes: a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each other, transparent electrodes being formed on corresponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing each other of the transparent plates; a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in a space between the transparent plates and is formed by polymer dispersed liquid crystal; and a light source module including a frame which is disposed behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame corresponding to the predetermined area being empty or transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of light sources which is mounted to the frame to be disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the transparent plates.

The plurality of light sources may be equidistantly disposed.

The back light unit may further include a light switch plate which is disposed behind the light source module, a light source member which can be selectively converted into a transparent state being disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the light switch plate, and the other area of the light switch plate being made of nontransparent material.

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The light switch member may be a TN liquid crystal panel which can be selectively converted into a transparent state.

According to another embodiment of the present invention, a game machine may further include an auxiliary light source disposed behind an area of the reel where a symbol is displayed, and the light source of the light source module may not be disposed at an area corresponding to a symbol selection area where a selected symbol of the reel is positioned.

Advantageous Effects

According to the present invention, since a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer is formed between a pair of transparent plates, transparent electrodes are formed at predetermined areas of the transparent plates contacting the polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer, and a frame to which a light source is mounted is made of transparent material or an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the frame is made empty, the polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer may be turned to be transparent by applying voltage to the transparent electrodes and accordingly things behind the predetermined area can be seen from the front of the back light unit. At this time, since a plurality of light sources or a planar light source is provided, uniform light can be obtained without a conventional light guide plate. In addition, the polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer also performs the function of diffusing light emitted from the light source, so a conventional non-transparent diffuse plate can be omitted.

In case that the light source is plural, the light sources are equidistantly disposed so that further uniform light can be obtained.

In addition, a back light unit is disposed behind the light source module and a light source member which can be selectively converted into a transparent state is disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined area of the light switch plate, and the other area of the light switch plate is made of nontransparent material, so the predetermined area can be selectively transparent and at the same time an area except the predetermined area is nontransparent so that things behind the area except the predetermined area cannot be seen.

Since a game machine is provided with a liquid crystal display including the above-stated back light unit, in case that voltage is applied to the transparent electrodes contacting the polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer, the selected symbol of the reel can be seen from the front of the game machine through the predetermined area, and on the other hand, in case that voltage is not applied to the transparent electrodes, the whole image display area of the liquid crystal display of the game machine can be used at a normal liquid crystal display.

In addition, by making the light switch member transparent, the selected symbol of the reel can be seen from the front of the game machine through the transparent electrodes provided to the transparent plates and the light switch member. At this time, since an area of the light switch plate except the light switch member is not transparent, things behind the area except the predetermined area can be prevented from being unnecessarily seen from the front of the game machine.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is an exploded perspective view of a liquid crystal display and a reel of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along a line II-II in FIG. 2.

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FIG. 4 is a drawing for explaining position relation of a pair of transparent plates and a light switch plate of a back light unit of a liquid crystal display and a symbol selection area of a reel of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a sectional view of a liquid crystal display and a reel of a game machine according to another exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF REFERENCE NUMERALS FOR MAIN PARTS OF DRAWINGS

- 200: liquid crystal display
- 210: liquid crystal panel
- 220: back light unit
- 221: polymer dispersed liquid crystal
- 223, 225: transparent plate
- 230: light source module
- 231: frame
- 233: light source
- 300: reel
- 301: reel drum
- 303: reel strip
- 305: symbol
- 307: auxiliary light source

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings, the thickness of layers, films, panels, regions, etc. are exaggerated for clarity. Like reference numerals designate like elements throughout the specification. It will be understood that when an element such as a layer, film, region or substrate is referred to as being "on" another element, it can be directly on the other element or intervening elements may also be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being "directly on" another element, there are no intervening elements present.

Since a back light unit according to an embodiment of the present invention and a liquid crystal display including a back light unit according to an embodiment of the present invention are included in a game machine according to an embodiment of the present invention, separate descriptions for a back light unit according to an embodiment of the present invention and a liquid crystal display including a back light unit according to an embodiment of the present invention are omitted.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, FIG. 2 is an exploded perspective view of a liquid crystal display and a reel of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along a line II-II in FIG. 2, FIG. 4 is a drawing for explaining position relation of a pair of transparent plates and a light switch plate of a back light unit of a liquid crystal display and a symbol selection area of a reel of a game machine according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, and FIG. 5 is a sectional view of a liquid crystal display and a reel of a game machine according to another exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Referring to FIG. 1, a game machine according to an embodiment of the present invention is provided with a body 101 of a cabinet shape, and various parts and controllers for game is housed in body 101.

Various parts which are necessary for performing game, e.g., an insert hole **103** for insertion of coin, various input buttons **105** or the like, may be provided or formed to body **101**.

As shown in FIG. 2 to FIG. 4, a game machine includes a liquid crystal display **200** which is a display device for displaying images, and a reel **300** which is disposed behind liquid crystal display **200**.

Liquid crystal display **200** includes a liquid crystal panel **210** and a back light unit **220**.

Liquid crystal display **200**, as shown in FIG. 1, is installed to body **101** of a game machine such that a front surface of liquid crystal panel **210** is exposed to outside. Accordingly, liquid crystal display **200** roles as an image display of a game machine and can display various images such as information or images for performing game and advertisements.

Liquid crystal display **200** according to an embodiment of the present invention operates to display desired images on the whole image display area of liquid crystal panel **210** or to convert a predetermined area among the whole image display area to be transparent or translucent. At this time, "transparent" or "translucent" means that an object or image behind the same can be seen in front, and "transparent or translucent" is simply written as "transparent".

The predetermined area is an area corresponding to a symbol selection area where the selected symbol of reel **300** disposed behind liquid crystal display **200** is disposed, and in case that the predetermined area is turned to be transparent, a symbol (e.g., a figure, a number, a picture or the like) displayed in the symbol selection area of reel **300** disposed behind liquid crystal display **200** can be seen from the front of liquid crystal display **200**.

In case that liquid crystal display **200** operates such the predetermined area becomes transparent, a symbol displayed on reel **300** can be seen from the front of a game machine through the predetermined area, so a game using the symbol displayed on reel **300** can be performed. At this time, liquid crystal display **200** operates such that a symbol of reel **300** can be seen through the predetermined area, and at the same time, may display other information or images necessary for a game or other information or images on an image display area other than the predetermined area.

On the other hand, in case that liquid crystal display **200** operates such that the predetermined area is not transparent (for example, displaying an image on the whole image display area), liquid crystal display **200** may operate as a normal display device, i.e., operate to display an image on the whole image display area while preventing a symbol of the reel from being seen from the front.

A back light unit, and a liquid crystal display for realizing this function according to an embodiment of the present invention and a game machine including the same will be described in detail hereinafter.

Referring to FIG. 2 to FIG. 4, liquid crystal display **200** includes liquid crystal panel **210** and back light unit **220** which are disposed back and forth side by side.

Liquid crystal panel **210** may be a conventional transparent liquid crystal panel, and for example, may be formed by sealing liquid crystal in a space formed between two facing transparent panels such as a glass panel on which thin film transistors are formed. At this time, a basic display mode of liquid crystal panel **210** may be set as a normally white. "Normally white" means that a white display state (light can penetrate toward a display surface, i.e., light penetrating through a display surface can be from the outside) is realized while a liquid crystal panel is not operated.

Back light unit **220** acts as a light source of liquid crystal display **200** and is disposed behind liquid crystal panel **210**.

Meanwhile, not shown in the drawing, liquid crystal display **200** may further include a chassis including various frames and holders for assembling liquid crystal panel **210** and back light unit **220**. In addition, liquid crystal display **200** may further include well known various parts such as a driving circuit for driving liquid crystal panel **210**, etc. Gap between liquid crystal panel **210** and back light unit **220** is enlarged for ease of description, but both may contact each other and may be disposed with a small gap.

Back light unit **220** includes a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** which is formed of polymer dispersed liquid crystal (PDLC).

PDLC is one of liquid crystal cell which can be used in a liquid crystal display (LCD) and regulates penetration of light depending on light scattering intensity. There are some types of PDLC, for example, it may be formed by scattering liquid crystal particles of several μm into polymer, or by containing liquid crystal into net type polymer. Alignment of liquid crystal of PDLC becomes irregular when voltage is not applied thereto and light scattering occurs on a surface having different refractive index from medium, and on the other hand, if voltage is applied to PDLC, directions of liquid crystal molecules becomes uniform so that light can penetrate therethrough.

Polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** is formed in a space between a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225** facing each other. That is, as shown in the drawing, a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225** are arranged to contact both sides of polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** respectively.

For example, by arranging a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225** to face each other and sealing PDLC in a space therebetween, a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225** and polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** disposed therebetween may be formed. Although structure for sealing polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** is not shown in the drawing, such a structure is obvious to a person in the art, so detailed description for the same will be omitted.

Transparent plates **223** and **225** may be formed of transparent material through which light can penetrate, e.g., may be made of transparent glass.

Meanwhile, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are formed respectively on facing surfaces of a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225**. That is, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are formed respectively on surfaces of a pair of transparent plates **223** and **225** contacting polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221**.

Transparent electrodes **227** and **229** may be made of material which is transparent and has electrical conductivity, and for example, may be made of ITO (Indium Tin Oxide) which is generally used as a transparent electrode of a liquid crystal panel.

At this time, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are formed on predetermined areas of surfaces of transparent plates **223** and **225** contacting polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221**. At this time, the predetermined areas are areas corresponding to a symbol selection area where selected area of reel **300** disposed behind liquid crystal display **200** is disposed. That is, a plurality of symbols are displayed on an outer surface of reel **300** and when rotating reel **300** stops, a symbol which is disposed at the front side of reel **300** is the selected symbol, and transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are formed on areas corresponding to an area where the selected symbol of reel **300** is disposed, i.e., corresponding to a symbol selection area. At this time, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** may be formed with size and shape substantially identical

with the symbol selection area. Accordingly, when seeing from the front of liquid crystal display **200**, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** and an area where the selected symbol is displayed, i.e., the symbol selection area are overlapped in a back and forth direction.

Meanwhile, not shown in the drawing, transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are connected to the outside electrical power source so as to be applied by voltage, and liquid crystal display **200** may include an electrical circuit for controlling to selectively apply voltage to transparent electrodes **227** and **229**.

A light source module **230** which emits light for image display of liquid crystal display **200** is disposed behind transparent plate **225**.

Light source module **230** may include a frame **231** and a light source **233** which is fixed to frame **231**.

A portion of frame **231** corresponding to the predetermined area where transparent electrodes **227** and **229** are disposed is formed to be empty or transparent. For example, as shown in the drawing, frame **231** may be made of transparent material such as transparent plastic or transparent glass. On the other hand, not shown in the drawing, a portion of frame **231** corresponding to the predetermined area may be formed to be empty. That is, frame **231** may be formed in a rectangular ring shape in which a region including a portion corresponding to the predetermined area is an empty space.

Light source **233** may be provided as a plural, and is installed to frame **231** so as to be disposed at an area corresponding to an area occupied by transparent plates **223** and **225**, i.e., at an area corresponding to an area occupied by liquid crystal panel **210**. At this time, as shown in FIG. 2, the plurality of light sources **233** may be equidistantly disposed.

Light source **233** may be realized as an arbitrary device which can emit light such as a cathode ray lamp and LED lamp. For example, light source **233** may be a bar-shaped lamp, and respective bar-shaped lamp is disposed in a horizontal direction, and the plurality of the bar-shaped lamp which are respectively disposed in a horizontal direction are equidistantly disposed in a vertical direction. Meanwhile, according to another embodiment of the present invention, a plurality of bar-shaped lamps which are respectively disposed in a vertical direction may be equidistantly disposed in a horizontal direction. In addition, according to yet another embodiment of the present invention, a plurality of dot light sources (e.g., LED lamps) may be equidistantly disposed on the transparent frame **231**.

According to yet another embodiment of the present invention, light source **233** may be a planar light source covering a surface of the transparent frame **231**.

As such, a plurality of light sources are equidistantly disposed on frame **231**, or a planar light source are formed on a surface of frame **231**, so light can penetrate toward the front more uniformly when compared to a case that a light source is disposed on an edge of a panel. Accordingly, according to embodiments of the present invention, a light guide plate which is used in a conventional back light unit can be omitted.

Polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** which is formed between transparent plates **223** and **225** diffuses light emitted from light source module **230** to make more uniform. Since light is diffused by polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer **221** and then goes forward, luminance becomes more uniform and view angle becomes greater.

Meanwhile, according to another embodiment of the present invention, a light switch plate **240** which is interposed between light source module **230** and reel **300** may be further provided.

A predetermined area of light switch plate **240** may be formed to be selectively converted to a light penetration area, and the remained area thereof is made of non-transparent material.

At this time, the predetermined area of light switch plate **240** is an area corresponding to an area occupied by transparent electrodes **227** and **229** which are formed in transparent plates **223** and **225**.

That is, as shown in the drawing, light switch plate **240** may include a light switch member **241** which is disposed at an area corresponding to an area of transparent electrodes **227** and **229**, and a non-transparent portion **243** occupying the remained area.

Light switch member **241** may be realized as a device which can be selectively converted into one of a transparent state a non-transparent state, and for example, may be realized as a liquid crystal panel including a liquid crystal layer which can be selectively converted from a non-transparent state to a transparent state. In particular, light switch member **241** may be realized as a TN liquid crystal panel including TN liquid crystal layer which is made of liquid crystal operating in a TN (Twisted Nematic) type. Since TN type has a low optical penetration ratio, light switch member **241** made of TN liquid crystal panel can effectively hide in a non-transparent state the reel **300** behind. Hereinafter, a case that light switch member **241** is TN liquid crystal panel is exemplarily described.

For example, TN liquid crystal panel **241** may include transparent plates **245** and **257** which are made of transparent material and disposed to face each other, and a TN liquid layer **251** which is formed in a space between transparent plates **245** and **257**, and transparent electrodes **253** and **255** are respectively formed on surfaces of transparent plates **245** and **257** contacting TN liquid crystal layer **251**.

For example, transparent plates **245** and **257** may be made of arbitrary transparent material such as transparent synthetic resin, transparent glass, or the like, and TN liquid crystal layer **251** may be formed by sealing liquid crystal in a space between transparent plates **245** and **257**.

Transparent electrodes **253** and **257** may be made of material which is transparent and has electrical conductivity, and for example, may be made of ITO (Indium Tin Oxide) which is generally used as a transparent electrode of a liquid crystal panel.

Non-transparent portion **243** of light switch plate **240** may be arbitrary non-transparent material such as non-transparent synthetic resin.

For example, by applying voltage to transparent electrodes **253** and **255** contacting liquid crystal layer **251** so as to convert TN liquid layer **251** into a transparent state, TN liquid crystal panel **241** can become a transparent state having light penetration characteristic. In this way, TN liquid crystal panel **241** can selectively become a transparent state, so TN liquid crystal panel **241** can act as a light switch.

Reel **300** is housed within body **101** of a game machine so as to be disposed behind liquid crystal display **200**. Reel **300** may be provided as a plural, respective reel **300** may be disposed adjacently in parallel. Respective reel **300** may be formed to rotate independently.

For example, reel **300** may include a reel drum **301** and a reel strip **303** which is attached to an outer surface of reel drum **301**. And a motor (not shown) for rotating reel drum **301** may be provided.

For example, reel strip **303** may be made of translucent resin.

A plurality of symbols **305** may be displayed on an outer surface of reel strip **303**, and respective symbol **305** may be

equidistantly disposed with some interval therebetween. At this time, the symbol may be a number, a picture, a letter, etc. Hereinafter, an area of reel strip 303 where the symbol is displayed is referred to as a symbol display area. That is, respective reel 300 has symbol display area of the same number with the number of symbols 305 displayed on an outer surface thereof.

Respective reel 300 may rotate and stop at a state that the symbol display area where the symbol is displayed is positioned at a front center. Hereinafter, an imaginary area corresponding to a front center at which the symbol display area where the symbol 305 is displayed stops is referred to as the symbol selection area.

As shown in FIG. 3 and FIG. 4, an area occupied by transparent electrodes 227 and 229 which is formed in a pair of transparent plates 223 and 225 and an area occupied by light switch member 241 of light switch plate 240, i.e., TN liquid crystal panel 241 are disposed at a position corresponding to the symbol selection area.

That is, a number, a position, a size, and a shape of transparent electrodes 227 and 229 which is formed in transparent plates 223 and 225 corresponds to a number, a position, a size, and a shape of the symbol selection area. Similarly, a number, a position, a size, and a shape of TN liquid crystal panel 241 of light switch plate 240 corresponds to a number, a position, a size, and a shape of the symbol selection area of reel 300. For example, as shown in the drawing, three reels 300 are arranged in a horizontal direction, transparent electrodes 227 and 229 and TN liquid crystal panel 241 are provided as three respectively, and have a position and a shape corresponding to a position and a shape of the symbol selection area.

If voltage is applied to transparent electrodes 227 and 229, a portion of polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer 221 which is interposed between transparent electrodes 227 and 229 becomes a light penetration state, i.e., a transparent state by the characteristic of PDLC as described above. Accordingly, the selected symbol which is disposed on the symbol selection area of reel 300 behind transparent electrodes 227 and 229 can be seen from the front of liquid crystal display 200. At this time, a portion of liquid crystal panel 210 corresponding to an area where transparent electrodes 227 and 229 are positioned is controlled to be normally white state, so the selected symbol of reel 300 can be seen from the front of liquid crystal display 200 through an area where transparent electrodes 227 and 229 of back light unit 220 are positioned and the corresponding area of liquid crystal panel 210.

In addition, in case that light switch plate 240 is further provided, so as to make polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer 221 and TN liquid crystal layer 241 which correspond to the symbol selection area of reel 300 transparent respectively, voltage is respectively applied to transparent electrodes 227 and 229 contacting polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer 221 and transparent electrodes 253 and 255 contacting TN liquid crystal layer 251, and thereby the selected symbol positioned at the symbol selection area of reel 300 can be seen from the front of a game machine.

A game machine according to another embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to FIG. 5.

According to another embodiment of the present invention, an auxiliary light source 307 is disposed behind the symbol display area where symbol 305 of reel 300 is displayed. For example, referring FIG. 5, auxiliary light source 307 may be mounted on a mount 309 which is disposed behind the symbol display area where symbol 305 is displayed. Auxiliary light source 307 may be an arbitrary light source emitting light such as an LED lamp.

At this time, as shown in FIG. 5, light source 233 of light source module 230 may be arranged not to be disposed at an area corresponding to the symbol selection area of transparent plates 223 and 225.

In this case, by applying voltage to transparent electrodes 227 and 229 so that an area corresponding to transparent electrodes 227 and 229 becomes a transparent viewable area, and accordingly, the selected symbol 305 of reel 300 can be from the front of a game machine. In particular, at this time, by turning on light source 307 disposed behind the symbol display area of reel 300, the symbol displayed on the selected symbol display area can be further brightly seen. Further, when a game using reel 300 is not played, that is, when liquid crystal display 200 is used purely as a display device, since light emitted from auxiliary light source 307 disposed behind reel strip 303 of reel 303 passes through an area of transparent plates 223 and 225 where light source 233 is not disposed, so drawback of nonuniform disposition of light sources of light source module 230 can be overcome so as to obtain more uniform luminance.

While this invention has been described in connection with what is presently considered to be practical exemplary embodiments, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments, but, on the contrary, is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

[Industrial Applicability]

The present invention relates to a back light unit, and a liquid crystal display and a game machine including the same, so has an industrial applicability.

What is claimed is:

1. A back light unit for a liquid crystal display comprising: transparent electrodes; a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each other, the transparent electrodes being formed on corresponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing each other of the transparent plates; a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in a space between the transparent plates and is polymer dispersed liquid crystal; a light source module including a frame which is disposed behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame corresponding to the predetermined areas being empty or transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of light sources which is mounted to the frame to be disposed at an area corresponding to the predetermined areas of the transparent plates; and a light switch plate, which is disposed behind the light source module, including a light switch member, which can be selectively converted into a transparent state, being disposed at an area of the light switch plate corresponding to the predetermined areas, and another area of the light switch plate being made of nontransparent material.
2. The back light unit of claim 1, wherein the plurality of light sources are equidistantly disposed.
3. The back light unit of claim 1, wherein the light switch member is a TN liquid crystal panel which can be selectively converted into the transparent state.
4. A liquid crystal display comprising: a back light unit of claim 3; and a liquid crystal panel disposed at one side of the transparent plates which is opposite to a side where the light source module is disposed.

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5. A game machine comprising:
 a liquid crystal display including a liquid crystal panel and
 a back light unit disposed behind the liquid crystal panel;
 and
 at least one reel which is disposed behind the back light unit 5
 and on which a plurality of symbols are disposed,
 wherein the back light unit comprises:
 transparent electrodes;
 a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each
 other, the transparent electrodes being formed on corre- 10
 sponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing each
 other of the transparent plates;
 a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in
 a space between the transparent plates and is polymer
 dispersed liquid crystal; and 15
 a light source module including a frame which is disposed
 behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame cor-
 responding to the predetermined areas being empty or
 transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of
 light sources which is mounted to the frame to be dis- 20
 posed at an area corresponding to the predetermined
 areas of the transparent plates.
6. The game machine of claim 5, wherein the plurality of
 light sources are equidistantly disposed.
7. The game machine of claim 5, further comprising a light 25
 switch plate which is disposed behind the light source mod-
 ule, a light switch member which can be selectively converted
 into a transparent state being disposed at an area of the light
 switch plate corresponding to the predetermined areas, and
 another area of the light switch plate being made of nontrans- 30
 parent material.
8. The game machine of claim 7, wherein the light switch
 member is a TN liquid crystal panel which can be selectively
 converted into a transparent state.
9. The game machine of claim 5, further comprising an 35
 auxiliary light source disposed behind an area of the at least
 one reel where a symbol is displayed, wherein the light source
 of the light source module or the plurality of light sources of
 the light source module is not disposed at an area correspond-
 ing to a symbol selection area where a selected symbol of the 40
 at least one reel is positioned.
10. A liquid crystal display comprising:
 a back light unit of claim 1; and
 a liquid crystal panel disposed at one side of the transparent 45
 plates which is opposite to a side where the light source
 module is disposed.

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11. A liquid crystal display comprising:
 a back light unit comprising:
 transparent electrodes;
 a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face
 each other, the transparent electrodes being formed on
 corresponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing
 each other of the transparent plates;
 a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed
 in a space between the transparent plates and is poly-
 mer dispersed liquid crystal; and
 a light source module including a frame which is dis-
 posed behind the transparent plates, an area of the
 frame corresponding to the predetermined areas being
 empty or transparent, and a planar light source or a
 plurality of light sources which is mounted to the
 frame to be disposed at an area corresponding to the
 predetermined areas of the transparent plates; and
 a liquid crystal panel disposed at one side of the transparent
 plates which is opposite to a side where the light source
 module is disposed,
 wherein the plurality of light sources are equidistantly
 disposed.
12. A liquid crystal display comprising:
 a back light unit comprising:
 transparent electrodes;
 a pair of transparent plates which are disposed to face each
 other, the transparent electrodes being formed on corre-
 sponding predetermined areas of surfaces facing each
 other of the transparent plates;
 a polymer dispersed liquid crystal layer which is formed in
 a space between the transparent plates and is polymer
 dispersed liquid crystal; and
 a light source module including a frame which is disposed
 behind the transparent plates, an area of the frame cor-
 responding to the predetermined areas being empty or
 transparent, and a planar light source or a plurality of
 light sources which is mounted to the frame to be dis-
 posed at an area corresponding to the predetermined
 areas of the transparent plates; and
 a liquid crystal panel disposed at one side of the transparent
 plates which is opposite to a side where the light source
 module is disposed.

* * * * *

专利名称(译)	背光单元和液晶显示装置以及包括其的游戏机		
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摘要(译)

一种游戏机，包括：液晶显示器，包括液晶面板和背光单元；至少一个卷轴设置在背光单元后面，并且在其上设置多个符号。背光单元包括：一对透明板，设置成彼此面对，透明电极形成在透明板的相应预定区域上；聚合物分散的液晶层，形成在透明板之间的空间中；光源模块包括：框架，设置在透明板后面；框架的区域，对应于预定区域是空的或透明的；以及平面光源或多个光源，安装在框架上是设置在对应于透明板的预定区域的区域。

