

INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS AND METHODS WITH FEEDBACK DEVICES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority from and the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 62/617,506, entitled “INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS AND METHODS WITH FEEDBACK DEVICES,” filed January 15, 2018, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

FIELD OF DISCLOSURE

[0002] The present disclosure relates generally to interactive systems and methods. More specifically, embodiments of the present disclosure relate to interactive systems and methods that utilize a wearable device to provide feedback to a guest in an amusement park.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Amusement parks and/or theme parks may include various entertainment attractions. Some existing attractions may provide guests with an immersive or interactive experience. For example, guests may visit areas having various features, such as audio, video, and special effects. With the increasing sophistication and complexity of modern attractions, and the corresponding increase in expectations among amusement park and/or theme park guests, improved and more creative attractions are needed, including attractions that provide a more interactive and personalized experience.

SUMMARY

[0004] Certain embodiments commensurate in scope with the originally claimed subject matter are summarized below. These embodiments are not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure, but rather these embodiments are intended only to provide a brief

summary of certain disclosed embodiments. Indeed, the present disclosure may encompass a variety of forms that may be similar to or different from the embodiments set forth below.

[0005] In one embodiment, a wearable device includes a first radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag, a second RFID tag, one or more feedback devices configured to provide feedback to a guest, and a microcontroller configured to generate a first control signal that causes a first type of feedback via the one or more feedback devices in response to interaction between electromagnetic radiation having a first frequency and the first RFID tag and to generate a second control signal that causes a second type of feedback via the one or more feedback devices in response to interaction between electromagnetic radiation having a second frequency and the second RFID tag.

[0006] In one embodiment, a system includes a wearable device having a first radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag with a first memory that stores respective identification information. The system also includes a first reader configured to transmit electromagnetic radiation having a first frequency that enables the first reader to read the respective identification information from the first memory and to write data to the first memory of the first RFID tag. The system further includes one or more light emitters supported by the wearable device and a microcontroller supported by the wearable device. The microcontroller is configured to receive at least one of a first signal indicative of receipt of the transmitted electromagnetic radiation at the first RFID tag and a second signal indicative of the data written to the first memory, and the microcontroller is configured to generate a control signal that causes at least one of the one or more light emitters to illuminate based on the received first signal or the received second signal.

[0007] In one embodiment, a method includes transmitting electromagnetic radiation having a first frequency from a first reader, and transmitting identification information from a first radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag supported by a wearable device to the first reader in response to receipt of the transmitted electromagnetic radiation having the first frequency. The method also includes receiving, at a microcontroller supported

by the wearable device, a first signal from the first RFID tag that indicates receipt of the electromagnetic radiation comprising the first frequency at the first RFID tag. The method further includes generating a first control signal, using the microcontroller, in response to receipt of the first signal at the microcontroller, wherein the first control signal causes one of a plurality of available types of illumination of one or more light emitters supported by the wearable device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0008] These and other features, aspects, and advantages of the present disclosure will become better understood when the following detailed description is read with reference to the accompanying drawings in which like characters represent like parts throughout the drawings, wherein:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of an interactive system, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

[0010] FIG. 2 is an illustration showing communication between a reader and a wearable device that may be used in the interactive system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

[0011] FIG. 3 is an illustration showing communication between a reader and multiple wearable devices that may be used in the interactive system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

[0012] FIG. 4 is an illustration of a team feedback that may be provided by the interactive system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure;

[0013] FIG. 5 is a front view of a wearable device that may be used in the interactive system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure; and

[0014] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of a method of operating the interactive system of FIG. 1, in accordance with an aspect of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0015] One or more specific embodiments of the present disclosure will be described below. In an effort to provide a concise description of these embodiments, all features of an actual implementation may not be described in the specification. It should be appreciated that in the development of any such actual implementation, as in any engineering or design project, numerous implementation-specific decisions must be made to achieve the developers' specific goals, such as compliance with system-related and business-related constraints, which may vary from one implementation to another. Moreover, it should be appreciated that such a development effort might be complex and time consuming, but would nevertheless be a routine undertaking of design, fabrication, and manufacture for those of ordinary skill having the benefit of this disclosure.

[0016] Amusement parks feature a wide variety of entertainment, such as amusement park rides, performance shows, and games. The different types of entertainment may include features that enhance a guest's experience at the amusement park. For example, a game may detect a guest's interaction with rendered images that are shown on a display screen. However, some interactive systems may provide a suboptimal experience due to a lack of feedback to notify the guest that an interaction is successful (e.g., recognized by the interactive system). Furthermore, some interactive systems may not determine an identity of the guest that interacted with the interactive element, and thus, may not accurately or efficiently track points or other game statistics for each guest. Thus, it may be desirable to provide systems and methods that provide feedback to the guest to indicate to the guest that the interactions are actually detected by the interactive system and/or that track game statistics for each guest.

[0017] Accordingly, the present disclosure relates to systems and methods that utilize radio-frequency identification (RFID) to provide feedback to a guest based on the guest's

interactions with an interactive system. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to an interactive system that includes one or more RFID readers and multiple wearable devices each having one or more RFID tags and one or more feedback devices (e.g., lights) that cooperate to indicate a successful interaction with an interactive element of an attraction. The components of the interactive system disclosed herein may also facilitate tracking of the guest's interactions and progress (e.g., game statistics) as the guest travels through the attraction.

[0018] As used below, the term “user” may refer to a user of the interactive system, and the user may be a guest at an amusement park. By way of example, a user may wear or carry the wearable device having the one or more feedback devices as the user travels through an attraction. The attraction may have various interactive elements, which may be any of a variety of images or objects (e.g., rendered images, virtual elements, or graphical elements presented on a display screen; physical targets; costumed characters). To experience the attraction, the user may interact with the interactive elements, such as by touching a physical target or approaching a costumed character, for example.

[0019] One or more RFID readers of the interactive system may be positioned at various locations about the attraction and/or proximate to certain interactive elements. In operation, the one or more RFID readers communicate with the one or more RFID tags within the wearable device of the user. The communication between the one or more RFID readers and the one or more RFID tags may trigger a feedback response via the one or more feedback devices (e.g., illuminate a light) of the wearable device, thereby providing feedback to notify the user that the interactive system has detected the user within the attraction and/or has detected the user's interaction with an interactive element, for example. The communication between the one or more RFID readers and the one or more RFID tags may also enable the interactive system to track the user's progress (e.g., game statistics) as the user travels through the attraction. For example, the interactive system may detect and keep track of the number of targets contacted by the user and/or the number of costumed characters met by the user.

[0020] Furthermore, in one embodiment, the interactive system may provide feedback indicative of the user's status (e.g., level within the game) via the one or more feedback devices of the wearable device. For example, upon reaching a certain number of points or an advanced level in the game, the one or more RFID readers may write data to the one or more RFID tags within the wearable device that trigger a feedback response via the one or more feedback devices (e.g., illuminate multiple lights). Thus, the interactive system may provide substantially immediate feedback when the user interacts with interactive elements of the attraction and/or when the user reaches certain levels (e.g., milestones or achievements). Furthermore, the interactive system may enable the user to receive such feedback without the need to refer to external devices, such as a mobile phone or kiosk, thereby providing a more immersive and enjoyable experience.

[0021] Turning now to the drawings, FIG. 1 is a schematic representation of an interactive system 10 including a reader system 12 (e.g., radio-frequency identification [RFID] reader system) and a wearable device 14. In one embodiment, the wearable device 14 is a wearable or portable device, such as a bracelet, necklace, charm, pin, or toy that may be worn or carried by a user as the user travels through an attraction. As discussed in more detail below, the reader system 12 is capable of communicating with the wearable device 14 through electromagnetic radiation, and the communication enables tracking of the user's progress through the attraction (e.g., number of rides completed, areas visited, interactive elements contacted, costumed characters met, virtual achievements won). The communication also enables the wearable device 14 to provide feedback indicative of the progress and/or various interactions to the user through a feedback response (e.g. light, sound, or haptics) output by the wearable device 14.

[0022] As illustrated in FIG. 1, one embodiment of the reader system 12 includes a first reader 16 and a second reader 18 that are communicatively coupled to a computing system 20 (having a memory 54 and a processor 56) that accesses information stored in one or more databases 22 (e.g., cloud-based storage system.) Generally, the first reader 16 and the second reader 18 transmit electromagnetic radiation (e.g., signals) to the

wearable device 14. In one embodiment, the first reader 16 transmits signals 24 of one frequency (e.g., range) and the second reader 18 transmits signals 26 of another frequency (e.g., range) that is different from the first frequency. In addition to transmitting signals 24, 26, the first reader 16 and the second reader 18 can receive signals, such as signals returned from the wearable device 14 and signals from the computing system 20. In one embodiment, the computing system 20 instructs the readers (e.g., the first reader 16 and the second reader 18) to send signals 24, 26 to the wearable device 14 based on information stored in data encoded in the one or more databases 22. Thus, it should be appreciated that the first reader 16 and the second reader 18 may be transceivers that are capable of both sending and receiving signals.

[0023] As illustrated in FIG. 1, one embodiment of the wearable device 14 includes a first RFID tag 28, a second RFID tag 30, a microcontroller 32, one or more light emitting diodes (LEDs) 34a, 34b, 34c, 34d, and power circuitry 36 that cooperate to enable the wearable device 14 of the interactive system 10 to function as disclosed. As illustrated, the wearable device 14 has four LEDs 34; however, it should be appreciated that the wearable device 14 may have fewer or more LEDs 34. The first RFID tag 28 and the second RFID tag 30 each include an antenna 38 that transmits and receives signals, a memory 40 storing information (e.g., unique identification code), a microchip 42, and an integrated circuit 44 to power the microchip 42. Additionally, the integrated circuit 44 powers the power circuitry 36, which provides power to the microcontroller 32. In one embodiment, the power circuitry 36 may include an energy storage device (e.g., capacitor, super capacitor, or battery) configured to store power. As shown, the microcontroller 32 of the wearable device 14 includes a memory 46 and a processor 48. The memory 46 stores computer-readable instructions that are executed by the processor 48 to control operation of the microcontroller 32.

[0024] In general, the antennae 38 of the first RFID tag 28 is designed to receive signals 24 from the first reader 16, and the antenna 28 of the second RFID tag 30 is designed to receive signals 26 from the second reader 18 of the reader system 12. The

microcontroller 32 identifies interactions between the tags 28, 30 and the readers 16, 18 and sends signals (e.g., control signals) to one or more of the LEDs 34 to provide feedback to the user. In one embodiment, the wearable device 14 of the interactive system 10 may contain additional or alternative feedback devices, such as audio devices configured to emit sound or haptics configured to provide a tactile output (e.g., vibration). Additionally or alternatively, backscatter indicative of a unique identification code is emitted by the first RFID tag 28 and/or the second RFID tag 30, and the backscatter is utilized by the computing system to track the user's progress (e.g., game statistics) as the user travels through the attraction.

[0025] More particularly, the first reader 16 of the reader system 12 continuously transmits signals 24. The antenna 38 of the first RFID tag 28 is configured to receive electromagnetic radiation (e.g., signals 24) from the first reader 16, as well as transmit signals 50 to the first reader 16. The integrated circuit 44 converts the electromagnetic radiation received by the antenna 38 into electricity to provide power to the microchip 42, which generates a backscatter (e.g., signal 50). The backscatter contains information (e.g., unique identification code) stored in the memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28. The backscatter (e.g., signal 50) is received by the first reader 16, which may send a signal to the computing system 20. The computing system 20 may process the signal to determine the identity of the user associated with the wearable device 14 (e.g., the user may register the wearable device 14 to associate the wearable device 14 with the user prior to experiencing the attraction) and/or to update information (e.g., game statistics) for the wearable device 14 in the one or more databases 22. In this manner, the interactive system 10 may track the user's progress (e.g., game statistics) as the user travels through the attraction.

[0026] Furthermore, once power is supplied to the microcontroller 32, the processor 48 of the microcontroller 32 may also receive and process a signal from the first RFID tag 28 that indicates that the signal 24 from the first reader 16 was received at the first RFID tag 28. The processor 48 of the microcontroller 32 may then execute instructions stored

on the memory 46 of the microcontroller 32 to illuminate one or more of the LEDs 34a, 34b, 34c, 34d to provide feedback to the user. In one embodiment, the microcontroller 32 may be programmed to provide a certain type of illumination (e.g., number of lights, color, blinking pattern, length of time) in response to the signal that indicates that the signal 24 from the first reader 16 was received at the first RFID tag 28. For example, when the first RFID tag 28 receives the signal 24 from the first RFID reader 16, the microcontroller 32 may cause a first LED 34a to illuminate. In one embodiment, the signals 24 transmitted by the first reader 16 are ultra-high frequency (UHF) signals (e.g., having a frequency between approximately 300 megahertz and 3 gigahertz). As such, the first RFID tag 28 may receive signals 24 from the first reader 16 when the first RFID tag 28 is located a relatively far distance (e.g., up to approximately 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or more meters) away from the first reader 16.

[0027] Additionally, the second reader 18 may continuously transmit signals 26. The antenna 38 of the second RFID tag 30 is configured to receive electromagnetic radiation (e.g., signals 26) from the second reader 18. The integrated circuit 44 converts the radiation received by the antenna 38 into electricity to provide power to the microchip 42, which generates a backscatter (e.g., signal 52). The backscatter contains information (e.g., unique identification code) stored in the memory 40 of the second RFID tag 30. It should be appreciated that in some embodiments, the information stored in the respective memories 40 of the first RFID tag 28 and the second RFID tag 30 may be linked (e.g., the backscatter generated in response to receipt of the signals 26 at the second RFID tag 30 may contain the information stored in the memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28), or the first RFID tag 28 and the second RFID tag 30 may share one memory 40 (e.g., be a dual RFID tag capable of receiving different frequency signals). The backscatter (e.g., signal 52) is received by the second reader 18, which may send a signal to the computing system 20. The computing system 20 may process the signal to determine the identity of the user associated with the wearable device 14 and/or to update information (e.g., game statistics) for the wearable device 14 in the one or more databases 22. Because the first RFID reader 16 may be associated with a particular area (e.g., room) of the attraction and

the second RFID reader 18 may be associated with a particular interactive element (e.g., target) of the attraction, the computing system 20 may track both the general location of the user, as well as the user's interactions with the interactive elements. In this manner, the interactive system 10 may track the user's progress (e.g., game statistics) as the user travels through the attraction.

[0028] Furthermore, once power is supplied to the microcontroller 32, the processor 48 of the microcontroller 32 may also receive and process a signal from the second RFID tag 30 that indicates that the signal 26 from the second reader 18 was received at the second RFID tag 30. The processor 48 of the microcontroller 32 may then execute instructions stored on the memory 46 of the microcontroller 32 to illuminate one or more of the LEDs 34a, 34b, 34c, 34d to provide feedback to the user. In one embodiment, the microcontroller 32 may be programmed to provide a certain type of illumination (e.g., number of lights, color, blinking pattern, length of time) in response to the signal that indicates that the signal 26 from the second reader 18 was received at the second RFID tag 30. For example, when the second RFID tag 30 receives the signal 26 from the second RFID reader 18, the microcontroller 32 may cause a second LED 34b to illuminate. In one embodiment, the signals 26 transmitted by the second reader 16 are near-field communication (NFC) signals (e.g., having a frequency between approximately 10 to 20 megahertz). As such, the second RFID tag 30 may receive signals 26 from the second reader 18 when the second RFID tag 30 is within a relatively short distance (e.g., approximately 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 centimeters) of the first reader 16. Because the first RFID reader 16 may be associated with a particular area (e.g., room) of the attraction and the second RFID reader 18 may be associated with a particular interactive element (e.g., target) of the attraction, the illumination (or other feedback, such as audio or haptics) on the wearable device 14 may provide multiple types of feedback to the user. For example, illumination of the first LED 34a in response to receipt of the signals 24 from the first RFID reader 16 may notify the user that the interactive system 10 has detected the user within the particular area of the attraction, while illumination of the second LED 34b in response to receipt of the signals 26 from

the second RFID reader 18 may notify the user that the interactive system 10 has detected the user's interaction with the particular interactive element.

[0029] In general, the second reader 18 operates similarly to the first reader 16; however, the first reader 16 communicates with the first RFID tag 28 (and not the second RFID tag 30), while the second reader 18 communicates with the second RFID tag 30 (and not the first RFID tag 28). The wearable device 14 includes at least two RFID tags 28, 30 that are each configured to communicate with respective readers 16, 18 that transmit signals 24, 26 that travel different distances. The first RFID tag 28 and the first reader 16 that communicate over a relatively long distance enable tracking a general location of the wearable device 14 and charging the wearable device 14, while the second RFID tag 30 and the second reader 18 that communicate over a relatively short distance enable monitoring interactions based on a contact (or close proximity) between the user and interactive elements in the attraction.

[0030] In one embodiment, the interactive system 10 may include multiple first readers 16 at different locations within an attraction. As a user moves through the attraction, the user's location is updated in the database 22 based on which first reader 16 is currently communicating with the wearable device 14. In one embodiment, feedback may be provided to the user based on each interaction with each one of the first readers 16. For example, one first reader 16 may be positioned at an entrance of the attraction, and another first reader 16 may be positioned in a room or area of the attraction. In this case, the wearable device 14 provides feedback (e.g., illumination of the first LED 34a) upon the user entering the attraction, thereby notifying the user that they have been detected by the interactive system 10. Then, once the user enters the room or area, the wearable device 14 provides another feedback (e.g., the same feedback or a different feedback, such as illumination of the second LED 34b), thereby notifying the user that they have been detected by the interactive system 10 as being within the new area.

[0031] In one embodiment, one or more first readers 16 and one or more second readers 18 may cooperate to improve the user's immersive experience. For example, the user

may enter an area containing one or more first readers 16. The area may include one or more targets each associated with or proximate to one or more second readers 18. As discussed above, once the wearable device 14 is within a range (e.g., a relatively long range) of one first reader 16 in the area, the wearable device 14 communicates with the one first reader 16, the database 22 is updated, and the wearable device 14 may provide feedback to the user that they have been detected within the area. Additionally, once the wearable device 14 is within a range (e.g., a relatively short range) of one second reader 18 (e.g., due to the user hitting, touching, or walking by the target associated with the one second reader 18), the wearable device 14 communicates with the one second reader 18, the database 22 is updated, and the wearable device 14 may provide feedback to the user that they have successfully interacted with the target (e.g., points have been assigned).

[0032] As discussed above, the microcontroller 32 may be programmed to provide some feedback to the user based on interactions between the RFID tags 28, 30 of the wearable device 14 and the readers 16, 18. Additionally or alternatively, the memory 40 of the wearable device 14 may be updated (e.g., one or more of the readers 16, 18 may write to the memory 40 of one or more RFID tags 28, 30), thereby enabling the wearable device 14 to provide other feedback, such as feedback indicative of the user's progress (e.g., level within a game), wait times, or the like. For example, upon detecting the user's first interaction with the second reader 18, the computing system 20 may instruct the first reader 16 to write data to the respective memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 that cause the microcontroller 32 (e.g., when received and processed by the microcontroller 32) to illuminate the first LED 34a. However, upon determining that the user has completed a predetermined number of successful interactions with targets (e.g., based on communications between the second RFID tag 30 and the second readers 18 associated with the targets), the computing system 20 may instruct the first reader 16 to write data to the respective memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 that cause the microcontroller 32 to illuminate multiple LEDs (e.g., LEDs 34a-d, or any combination thereof) and/or trigger a feedback response via a speaker or haptics. Thus, feedback is provided based on information stored in the database 22. For example, the database 22 may contain

information about the user's progress based on their interactions with one or more first readers 16 and second readers 18 throughout the attraction, and the feedback may be provided once certain conditions are met (e.g., level or points achieved). In this way, the wearable device 14 may provide feedback indicative of the user's overall progress or performance.

[0033] In one embodiment, the user may prompt or request the feedback by entering a particular area (e.g., a status update area) having one or more first readers 16. Communication between one of these first readers 16 and the first RFID tag 28 of the wearable device 14 may cause the computing system 20 to instruct the first reader 16 to write the data to the respective memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 to provide the feedback indicative of the user's progress. In one embodiment, the user may receive such feedback indicative of the user's progress each time the first RFID tag 28 communicates with one first reader 16 and/or one second reader 18. Thus, the user may be repeatedly updated regarding the progress as the user travels through the attraction.

[0034] In one embodiment, the LEDs 34a-d may be used to provide an indication of a wait time for an attraction. For example, upon detecting that the user is approaching the attraction (e.g., based on communications between the first RFID tag 28 and the first reader 16 proximate to an entrance of the attraction), the computing system 20 may instruct the first reader 16 to write data to the respective memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 that cause the microcontroller 32 (e.g., when received and processed by the microcontroller 32) to illuminate the LEDs 34a-d in a manner that conveys the wait time or whether a certain wait time threshold is met. For example, at least one LED 34 may be multi-colored (e.g., configured to emit red, yellow, and green light), and each color indicates an approximate wait time (e.g., a first color indicates a wait time greater than 15 minutes, a second color indicates a wait time less than 5 minutes, and a third color indicates no wait). Because multiple first readers 16 may be located throughout the attraction or amusement park, the user may continue to receive feedback about the wait time (e.g., because other first readers 16 may write data to the respective memory 40 of

the first RFID tag 28) even after the user moves out of the range of the first reader 16 that is proximate to the entrance of the attraction. In one embodiment, each LED 34 may represent an approximate wait time (e.g., 5, 10, 15 minutes), such that the number of LEDs 34 illuminated provides an indication of the wait time (e.g., four LED's indicates a wait time of 60 minutes or more, three LED's indicates a wait time of 45 minutes or more, two LED's indicates a wait time of 30 minutes or more, and one LED indicates a wait time of 15 minutes or more). In one embodiment, the LEDs 34 may represent a countdown timer. For example, upon detecting that the user is approaching the attraction, all LEDs 34a-d are initially illuminated and then are sequentially turned off as the countdown timer runs out.

[0035] As noted above, in one embodiment, the antenna 38 of the first RFID tag 28 may only receive UHF waves, while the antenna 38 of the second RFID tag 30 may only receive NFC waves. For example, the first RFID tag 28 may only communicate (e.g., receive or transmit) with UHF waves, and the second RFID tag 30 may only communicate with NFC waves. As UHF signals travel a longer distance, the first RFID tag 28 may frequently or continuously receive the UHF signals emitted by the first readers 16 as the user travels through the attraction, but the second RFID tag 30 may only receive the NFC signals emitted by the second readers 18 when the user positions the wearable device 14 close to the second readers 18. Thus, in one embodiment, the UHF signal may be used for powering or charging the wearable device 14 (e.g., via power harvesting by the integrated circuit 44 and power circuitry 36). However, the NFC signal may also be used for powering or charging the wearable device 14 in a similar manner.

[0036] It should be appreciated that the interactive system 10 may track multiple users and provide feedback on multiple wearable devices 14. For example, multiple users may each wear a respective wearable device 14 that is configured to communicate with multiple first readers 16 and second readers 18 disposed in different locations within the attraction. It should also be appreciated that in one embodiment, the wearable device 14 of the interactive system 10 may include a single RFID tag (e.g., a dual-frequency RFID

tag) that is capable of communicating with signals of a first frequency (e.g., a range of frequencies) and signals of a second frequency (e.g., another range of frequencies) to facilitate the techniques disclosed herein.

[0037] FIG. 2 is an illustration of one embodiment of the interactive system 10. As illustrated, the interactive system 10 includes two first readers 16a and 16b, the second reader 18 disposed within or proximate to a target 58, and the wearable device 14 worn by a user 60. The first readers 16a and 16b and the second reader 18 are communicatively coupled to the computing system 20 and the database 22. The first reader 16a continuously emits a signal 24a that may be received by the first RFID tag 28 of the wearable device 14 within a first area 62a (e.g., zone or room of an attraction), and similarly, the first reader 16b continuously emits a signal 24b that may be received by the first RFID tag 28 of the wearable device 14 within a second area 62b once the user 60 travels into the second area 62b. As such, depending on the location of the user 60, the wearable device 14 may communicate (e.g., receive signals/electromagnetic radiation, backscatter information) with one or both of the first reader 16a in the first area 62a or the first reader 16b in the second area 62b. Based on which first reader (e.g., 16a or 16b) communicates with the wearable device 14, the computing system 20 determines the location of the user 60 and updates the database 22 with data indicative of the location of the user 60. Additionally, as the wearable device 14 of the user 60 communicates with the first reader 16a or the first reader 16b, power is harvested and provided to the microcontroller 32. Thus, the microcontroller 32 begins to process signals received from the first RFID tag 28 and/or read data written to the memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28. For example, the microcontroller 32 may receive a signal from the first RFID tag 28 that indicates that the first RFID tag 28 has communicated with one of the first readers 16 and may provide a corresponding feedback response (e.g., illuminate one or more LEDs). As noted above, the first RFID tag 28 may receive a signal from the first reader 16 that writes data to the memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 that causes the microcontroller 32 to provide a particular feedback response.

[0038] As shown in FIG. 2, the second reader 18 is disposed within or proximate to the target 58. The target 58 may be any variety of objects or features within the attraction. In one embodiment, the target 58 is a stationary physical object; however, the target 58 may be a virtual object (e.g., image, virtual element, graphical element on a display screen) or a movable object, such as a costumed character traveling about the attraction. The second reader 18 emits the signal 26 that is receivable within an area 64. In operation, when the user 60 brings the wearable device 14 within the area 64, the wearable device 14 is in communication with the second reader 18. As a result, the second RFID tag 30 of the wearable device 14 emits a backscatter that includes information that identifies the user. The second reader 18 sends this information to the computing system 20 to indicate that the user 60 has been detected by the second reader 18, and thus, has interacted with the target 58. Furthermore, the microcontroller 32 may receive a signal from the second RFID tag 30 that indicates that the second RFID tag 30 has communicated with the second reader 18 and may provide a corresponding feedback response (e.g., illuminate one or more LEDs).

[0039] It should be appreciated that the microcontroller 32 may be configured to generate a first control signal that causes a first feedback response in response to receipt of a signal from the first RFID tag 28 that indicates that the first RFID tag 28 has communicated with one of the first readers 16, to generate a second control signal that causes a second feedback response in response to receipt of a signal from the second RFID tag 30 that indicates that the second RFID tag 30 has communicated with the second reader 18, and to generate a third control signal that causes a third feedback response in response to receipt of signals that indicate that both the first RFID tag 28 and the second RFID tag 30 have communicated with respective readers (i.e., the first reader 16 and the second reader 18). The first, second, and third feedback responses may be different types of feedback responses, such as a type of illumination (e.g., number of lights, color, blinking pattern, length of time), a type of sound (e.g., volume, tone, beep pattern, length of time), or a type of haptics (e.g., intensity, length of time).

[0040] At certain times, the user 60 may not be in either area 62a or 62b, and thus, may not receive signals 24a and 24b from the first readers 16a and 16b. In one embodiment, the wearable device 14 may utilize power stored in the power circuitry 36 to continue to provide power (e.g., for 5, 15, 30, 60 or more seconds) even while outside of the areas 62a and 62b. Accordingly, the wearable device 14 may provide feedback (e.g., illuminate LEDs to indicate progress, wait time, or the like) even while the user is outside of the areas 62a and 62b, thereby providing more time for the user to observe the feedback response. In one embodiment, the feedback response (e.g., illumination of the LEDs) may stop when the user 60 leaves the area 62a defined by the signals 24a emitted from the first reader 16a.

[0041] FIG. 3 is an illustration of one embodiment of the interactive system 10 including a first user 60a, a second user 60b, the second reader 18 disposed within or proximate to the target 58, and the first reader 16. The second reader 18 and the first reader 16 are communicatively coupled to the computing system 20 and the database 22. Additionally, the second reader 18 is emitting the signal 26 across the area 64. The first user 60a is wearing a first wearable device 14a including one or more LEDs 34, and the second user 60b is wearing a second wearable device 14b including one or more LEDs 34. In one embodiment, the second reader 18 has a relatively small communication range, and thus, communicates with the wearable device 14 when the user makes physical contact with the target 58 containing the second reader 18 or when the wearable device 14 is otherwise brought within the area 64. Further, the first reader 16 has a relatively long communication range, and thus, is continuously communicating with the wearable devices 14a and 14b through electromagnetic radiation.

[0042] In operation, when the first user 60a makes contact with (e.g., touches or hits) the target 58 containing the second reader 18, the wearable device 14 provides feedback 66 through the illumination of the one or more LEDs 34. More specifically, the contact the first user 60a makes with the second reader 18 brings the first wearable device 14a (specifically, the second RFID tag 30 of the first wearable device 14a) within the range of

the second reader 18. Because the second user 60b is at a distance 68 outside of the range of the second reader 18, the second user 60b does not receive feedback from the one or more LEDs 34 of the second wearable device 14b. In an embodiment, both the first user 60a and the second user 60b might both be within the range of the second reader 18 (e.g., by simultaneously contacting the target 58). In such cases, the LEDs 34 from both the first wearable device 14 and the second wearable device 14b would elicit a suitable feedback.

[0043] FIG. 4 shows an embodiment of the interactive system 10 illustrating a team feedback (e.g., feedback to multiple users that are designated or assigned to a team). As illustrated in FIG. 4, there is a first user 60a, a second user 60b, a third user 60c, the second reader 18, and the first reader 16. The second reader 18 and the first reader 16 are electronically coupled to the computing system 20 and the database 22. The first user 60a, the second user 60b, and the third user 60c have a first wearable device 14a, a second wearable device 14b, and a third wearable device 14c, respectively, which each have one or more LEDs 34. The first user 60a and the third user 60c are part of a team, and as such, may wear a team indicator 70 that distinguishes the first user 60a and the third user 60c from the second user 60b. In one embodiment, the team indicator may be a physical characteristic of the wearable device 14 (e.g., color, shape, pattern). In one embodiment, the team may be created or determined by the computing system 20 based on information stored in the database 22 (e.g., a family or other users linked together by characteristics, such as last name, age, group entering the attraction at the same time, game level; characteristics of the wearable devices 14; requests for team selection or assignment input by users). As such, the first user 60a and the third user 60c are on a first team (e.g., team A), and the second user is on a second team (e.g., team B).

[0044] As shown in FIG. 4, the first wearable device 14a worn by the first user 60a is within the area 64 to interact with the signal 26 emitted by the second reader 18. The second reader 18 receives information from the memory 40 of the second RFID tag 30 of the first wearable device 14a from the backscatter, as discussed above. The information

is sent to the computing system 20, which then identifies the first user 60a based on the information. Additionally, based on the information stored in the database 22, the computing system 20 determines that the first user 60a is on team A. As a result, the computing system 20 sends a signal (e.g., control signal) instructing the first reader 16 to send electromagnetic radiation to the wearable devices 14a, 14c of the first and third users 60a, 60c, to write data to the memory 40 of the respective first RFID tags 28. The respective microcontroller 32 of each of the wearable devices 14a, 14c reads the data written to the memory 40 of the respective first RFID tags 28. The updated memory 40 includes data that, when read by the microcontroller 32, causes the microcontroller 32 to initiate a particular feedback response.

[0045] As illustrated, the feedback response is provided via illumination of the LEDs 34 of the first wearable device 14a and the third wearable device 14c. Thus, a single interaction between one user (e.g., the first user 60a) and the target 58 can result in all users on a team receiving feedback due to the interaction. In one embodiment, users of the same team may be in a different zone (e.g., not receiving signals from the same first reader 16) but may still receive feedback as all first readers 16 may be communicatively coupled to a computing system 20. In one embodiment, the feedback is only provided to users receiving signals 24 from the same readers 16. In one embodiment, all users of the same team regardless of which first reader 16 they are receiving the signal 24 from, receive the feedback.

[0046] FIG. 5 shows an illustration of the wearable device 14, in accordance with an embodiment of the present techniques. While the wearable device 14 is shown with a lanyard 71 (e.g., rope or string) coupled to a housing 73, it should be appreciated that the wearable device 14 may have any suitable form. For example, the wearable device 14 may include a strap (e.g., to secure the housing 73 to a wrist of the user), or the wearable device 14 may be a charm or toy that is carried by the user. As shown, the wearable device 14 includes a first LED display 72, a second LED display 74, an audio device 76 (e.g., speaker), and haptics 78 (e.g., vibration device). Any combination of the LEDs 34,

haptics 78, audio device 76, or other feedback devices might be activated to provide feedback to a user. It should be appreciated that the wearable device 14 may include only one of these feedback devices or any combination of these feedback devices.

[0047] As shown, the wearable device 14 may include multiple LED displays (e.g., the first LED display 72 and the second LED display 74), and each LED display may provide various types of feedback. For example, the first LED display 72 may provide feedback indicative of interactions with the one or more first readers 16 and/or the one or more second readers 18, while the second LED display 74 may provide feedback indicative of a wait time for an attraction. As illustrated in FIG. 5, the first LED display 72 and the second LED 74 display each include three LEDs (34a-c and 34d-f, respectively). In one embodiment, the wearable device 14 may include any number of LED displays with any number of LEDs (e.g., 1, 2, or more than 2 LED displays containing one or multiple LEDs). In one embodiment, a single LED display (e.g., the LED display 72) may provide some or all of the various types of feedback disclosed herein.

[0048] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating one embodiment of a process 80 for operating the wearable device 14, in accordance with present techniques. It is to be understood that the steps discussed herein are merely exemplary, and certain steps may be omitted or added, and the steps may be performed in a different order. In one embodiment, the process 80 may be executed by the first RFID tag 28 and/or the second RFID tag 30 in cooperation with the microcontroller 32 of the wearable device 14.

[0049] The process 80 begins with the antenna 38 of the first RFID tag 28 and/or the second RFID tag 30 receiving electromagnetic radiation from a respective first reader 16 or second reader 18 (block 82). As discussed above, after the antenna 38 receives electromagnetic radiation, the antenna 38 returns a backscatter with information stored within the memory 40 of the RFID tag 28, 30 to the respective reader 16, 18. In one embodiment, this information may include an identification number that is specific to the wearable device 14, and thus, identifies a user (e.g., user using the wearable device 14). In one embodiment, the electromagnetic radiation emitted by the first reader 16 travels a

relatively long distance, and the electromagnetic radiation emitted by the second reader 18 travels a relatively short distance. The first RFID tag 28 is capable of communicating with the first reader 16, and the second RFID tag 30 is capable of communicating with the second reader 18.

[0050] Once the wearable device 14 has received electromagnetic radiation, the wearable device 14 harvests power (block 84) from the electromagnetic radiation. As discussed above, the first RFID tag 28 and the second RFID tag 30 may each include an integrated circuit 44 that powers the microchip 42. Additionally, the integrated circuit 44 powers the power circuitry 36, which provides power to the microcontroller 32 (block 86) and other components of the wearable device (e.g., feedback devices). In one embodiment, the power circuitry 36 may include an energy storage device (e.g., capacitor, super capacitor, or battery) that is electrically coupled to a receiver coil and that stores power upon the wearable device 14 receiving signals from the first reader 16 and/or the second reader 18.

[0051] Once the microcontroller 32 is powered, the processor 48 executes the command stored in the memory 46 to receive and/or process signals from the first RFID tag 28 and/or second RFID tag 30 (block 88). In one embodiment, the microcontroller 32 may be programmed to continually or periodically query the first RFID tag 28 and/or the second RFID tag 30 when powered.

[0052] The microcontroller 32 then outputs a signal (e.g., control signal) to one or more feedback devices (block 90.) In one embodiment, the control signal may result in one or more of the LEDs 34 and/or other feedback devices (e.g., audio devices, haptics) being activated. In one embodiment, the control signal is a variable voltage applied to one LED 34, which results in a change in the intensity of the LED 34. In one embodiment, the signal is an oscillating voltage signal that results in the LED 34 blinking.

[0053] The feedback devices (e.g., LEDs, haptics, audio device) provide a feedback response to the user (block 92). The feedback response may be provided in response to

interactions between the wearable device 14 and the reader systems 12 disposed in the attraction. For example, a feedback response may include lighting up one LED 34 to notify a user that they have entered a zone of the first reader 16 (e.g., the user's wearable device 14 is successfully communicating with the first reader 16) or successfully interacted with an interactive element, such as the target 58.

[0054] As noted above, the memory 40 of the first RFID tag 28 and/or the second RFID tag 30 may be written to by the first reader 16 and/or the second reader 18. Accordingly, the user may receive a feedback response upon achieving a goal based on information tracked in the database 22 (e.g., leveling up, reaching a high score). In one embodiment, a feedback response may result from a different user successfully achieving a goal (e.g., if the users are on the same team). In one embodiment, a feedback response may include one or more LEDs 34 that indicate a time (e.g., a wait time or a remaining time in an area of the attraction). In one embodiment, a feedback response may include a sound from an audio device 76 of the wearable device 14 to indicate that the user needs to perform an action (e.g., begin a race, move to the next zone, participate in a game, etc.) In one embodiment, an increasing volume of sound from the audio device 76, intensity of LED illumination, or intensity of haptic 78 might indicate progression toward a goal in the attraction, for example.

[0055] Accordingly, the present disclosure is directed to an interactive system having a reader system and a wearable device that emits a feedback response based on the communication between RFID tags of the wearable device and readers of the reader system. More specifically, the reader system includes readers (e.g., one or more first readers 16 and one or more second readers 18) that, in operation, communicate (e.g., transmit and receive signals) with a first RFID and a second RFID of a wearable device through electromagnetic radiation. The readers continuously emit electromagnetic radiation within a range (e.g., communication range), and upon the wearable device entering that range, the readers communicate with the wearable device. For example, one reader (e.g., the first reader) may have a communication range that is larger than the

communication range of another reader (e.g., the second reader). As such, the first reader generally communicates with the first RFID of the wearable device more often and/or at different times than the second reader communicates with the second RFID. A reader that communicates with a RFID tag more regularly, or for longer periods of time, may be more suitable for powering a power harvesting device, and thus, enabling feedback devices (e.g., audio devices, haptics, one or more LEDs) to be included in the wearable device that may need more power to operate. In one embodiment, the RFID readers are disposed in stationary targets that guests can interact (e.g., touch or hit). In one embodiment, the RFID readers are disposed in moveable targets (e.g., disposed within the costume of a character at an amusement park). While the embodiments disclosed herein include two RFID readers having two different communication ranges, it should be appreciated that any number of readers (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more readers) configured to have any number of different communication ranges (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more different communication ranges) may be provided within the system. Furthermore, the wearable device may include any number of RFID tags (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or more RFID tags) configured to communicate with the various readers to provide the functionality disclosed herein.

[0056] While only certain features of the disclosure have been illustrated and described herein, many modifications and changes will occur to those skilled in the art. It is, therefore, to be understood that the appended claims are intended to cover all such modifications and changes as fall within the true spirit of the disclosure. It should be appreciated that any of the features illustrated or described with respect to FIGS. 1-6 may be combined in any suitable manner.

[0057] The techniques presented and claimed herein are referenced and applied to material objects and concrete examples of a practical nature that demonstrably improve the present technical field and, as such, are not abstract, intangible or purely theoretical. Further, if any claims appended to the end of this specification contain one or more elements designated as “means for [perform]ing [a function]...” or “step for

[perform]ing [a function]...”, it is intended that such elements are to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112(f). However, for any claims containing elements designated in any other manner, it is intended that such elements are not to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112(f).