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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR A NATIONAL LOTTERY**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

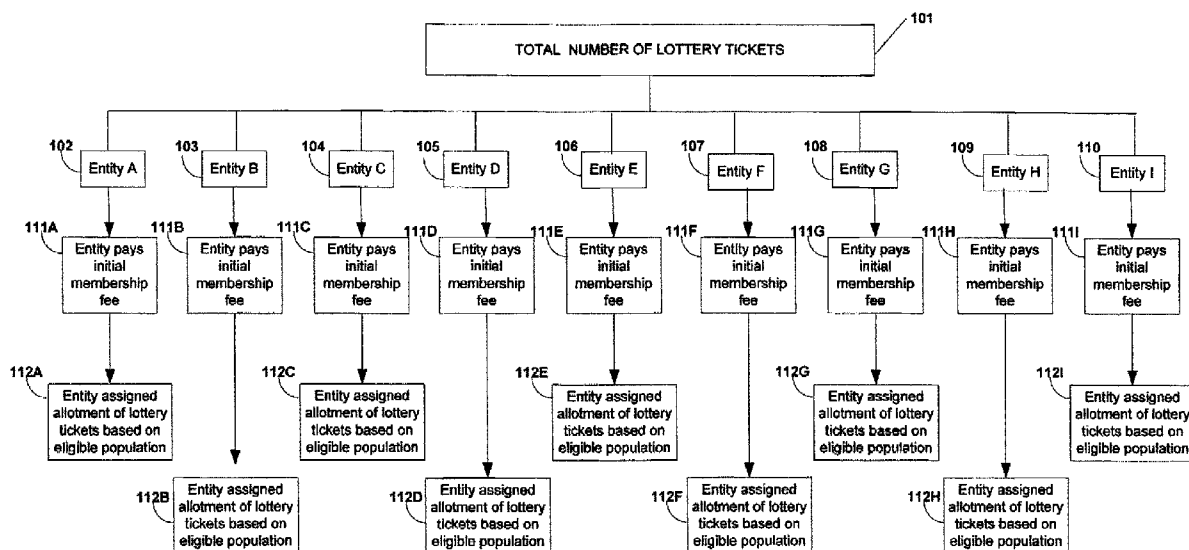
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A lottery method including assigning a plurality of entities respective allotments of lottery tickets so that each allotment of lottery tickets for each respective entity corresponds to a number of eligible people in the entity. The method also includes selling the lottery tickets in each respective entity such that each lottery ticket comprises a unique lottery identifier and the method includes selecting a winning lottery ticket from a combination of the lottery tickets. The method further includes distributing a portion of proceeds from the selling to a winner having the winning lottery ticket, distributing a portion of the proceeds from the selling to the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased, or holding the portion of the proceeds for another drawing.

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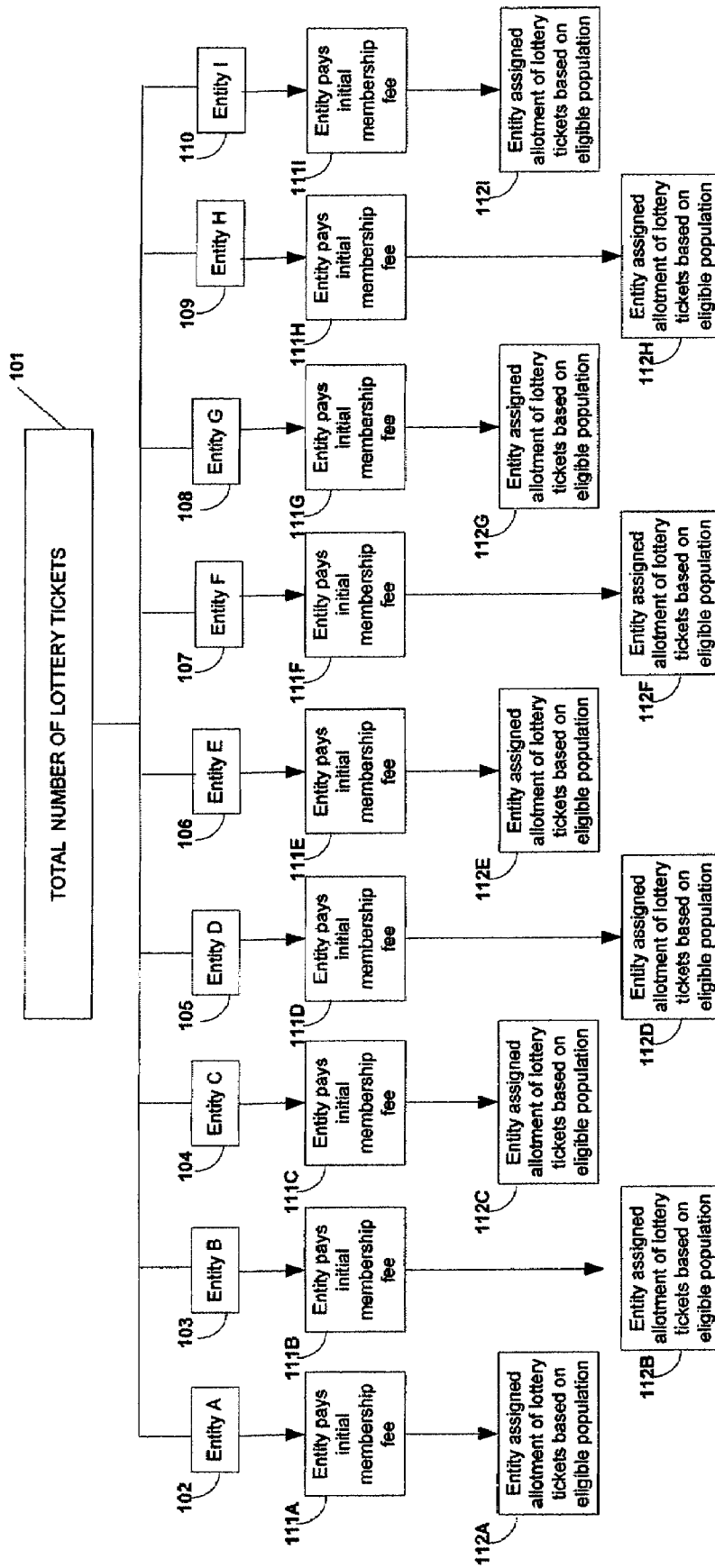


FIG. 1

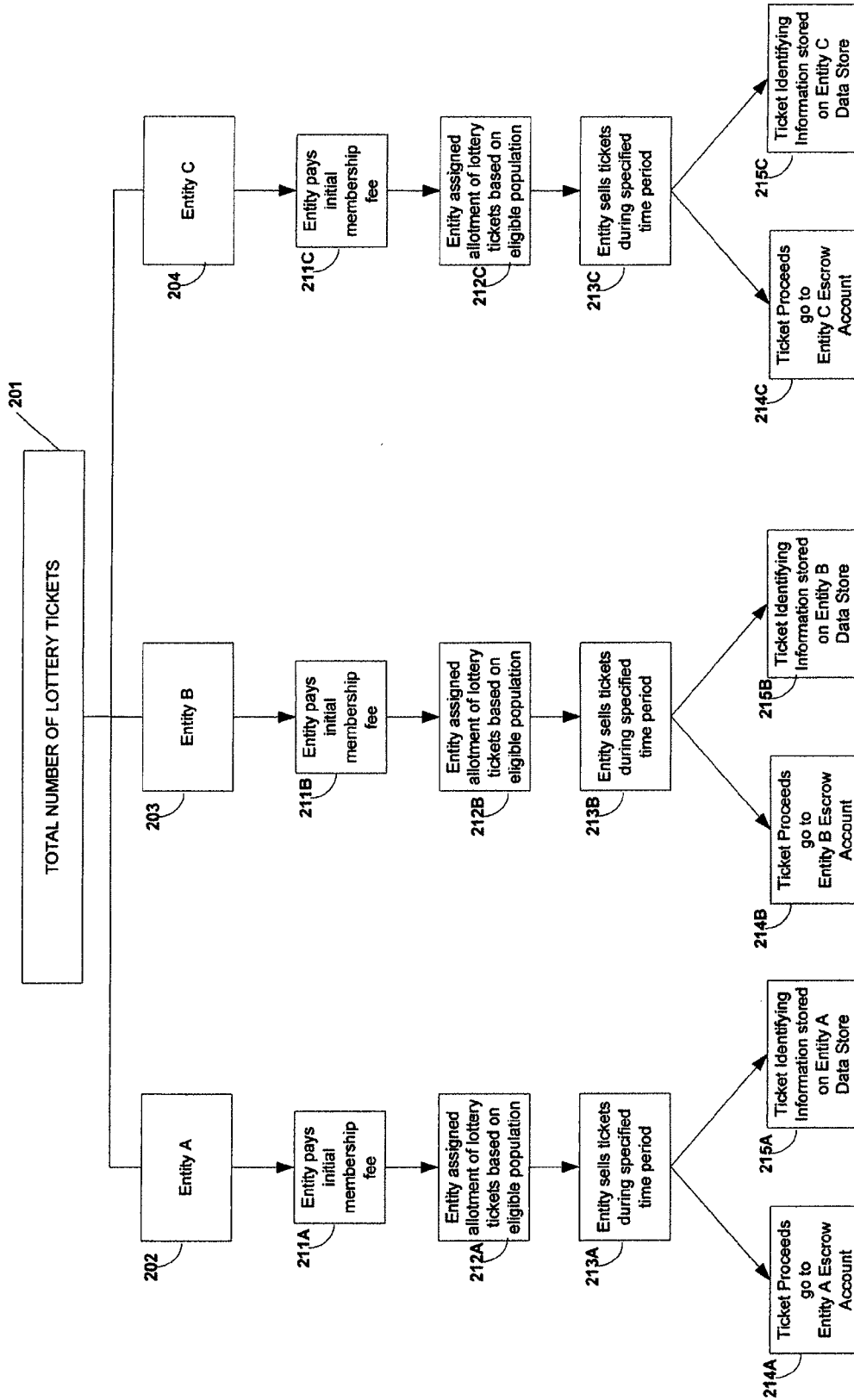


FIG. 2

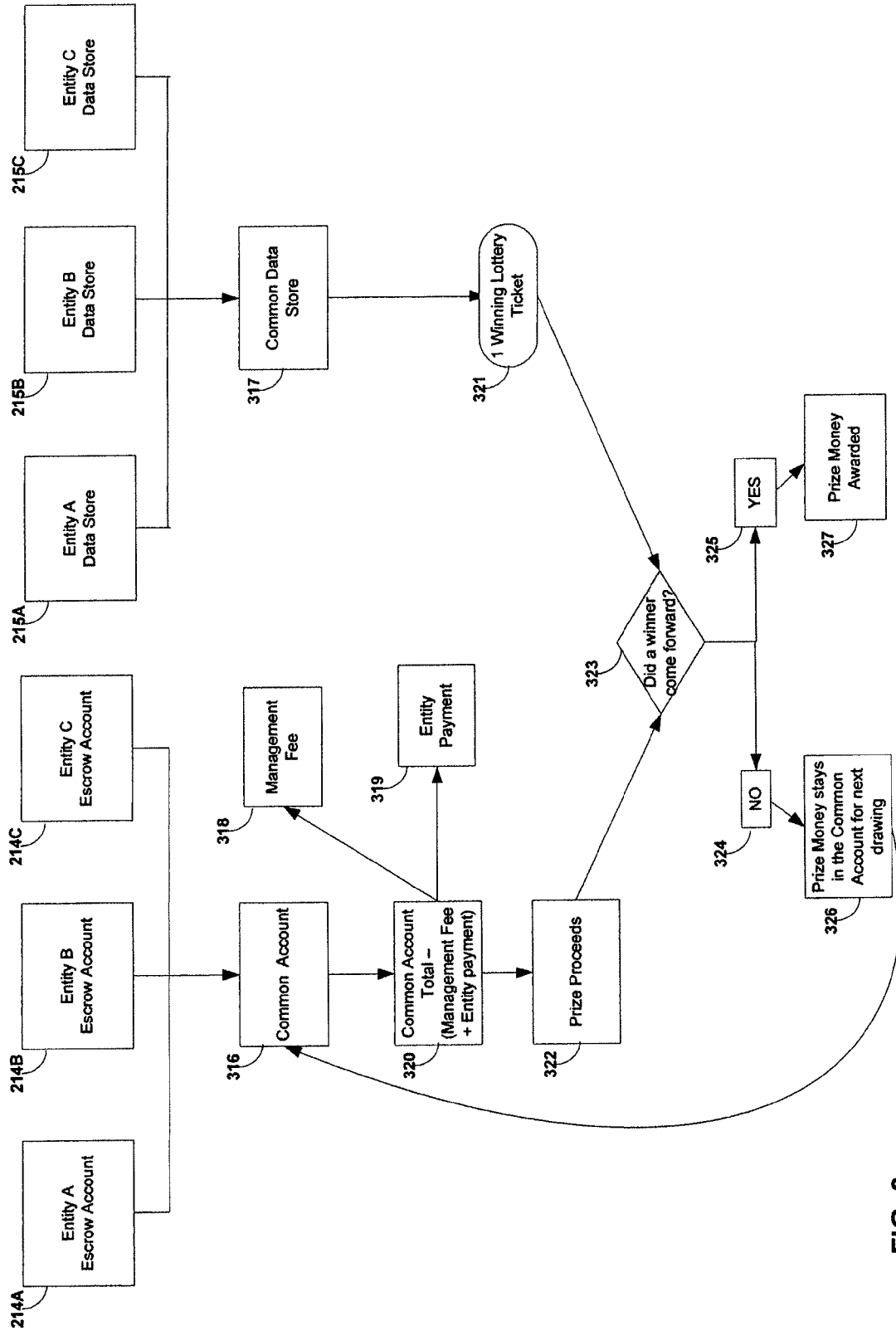


FIG. 3

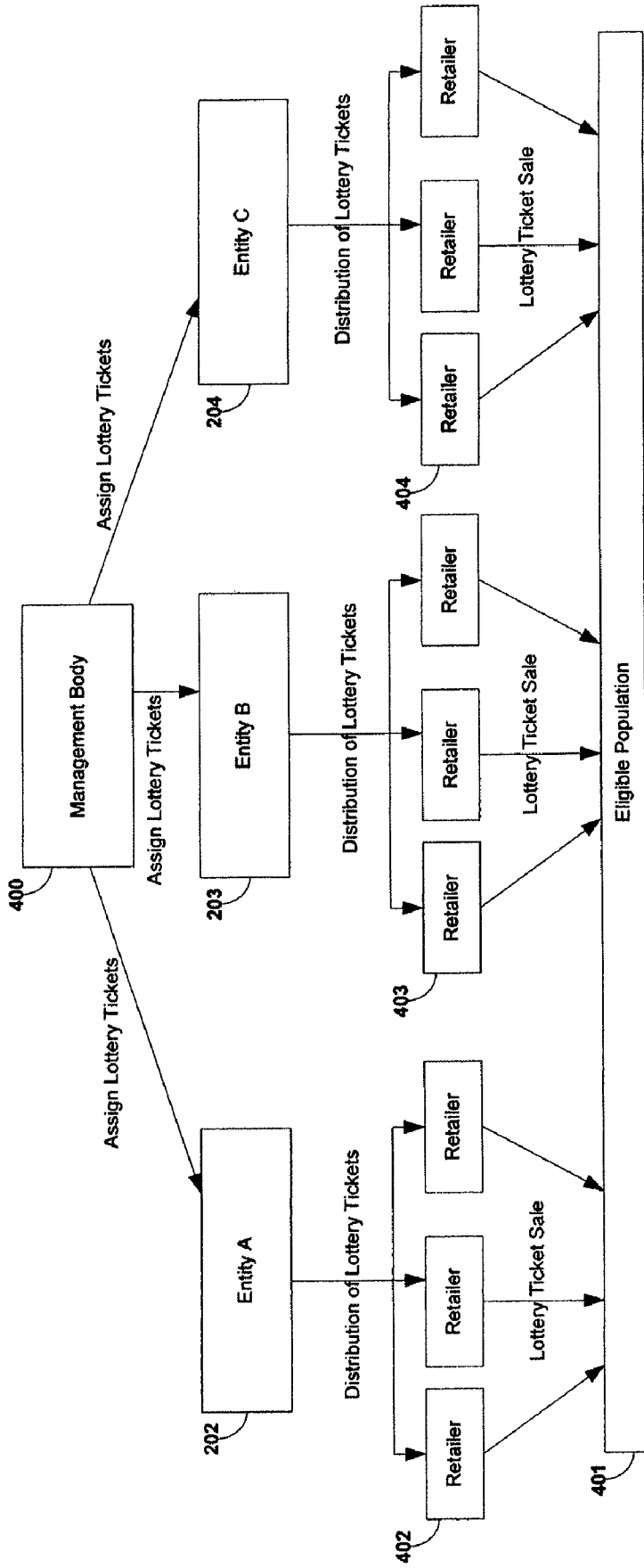


FIG. 4

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR A NATIONAL LOTTERY

BACKGROUND

[0001] Embodiments of the invention relate to a method and system for a national lottery, which combines the aspects of lottery, raffle, drawings, prize pools, and the probability of winning a prize through the random selection of a lottery ticket.

[0002] Many traditional lottery systems place much responsibility on each individual lottery entity and are costly to maintain and operate. With exemplary embodiments of the invention, individual lottery entities are relieved of such responsibility and cost expenditures.

SUMMARY

[0003] The above and other embodiments are accomplished according to one aspect of the invention wherein there is provided a method for a lottery which includes, according to one embodiment: a method for assigning a plurality of entities respective allotments of lottery tickets, wherein each allotment of lottery tickets for each respective entity corresponds to a number of eligible people in the entity; selling the lottery tickets in each respective entity, wherein each lottery ticket comprises a unique lottery identifier; selecting a winning lottery ticket from a combination of the lottery tickets; and distributing a portion of proceeds from the selling to a winner having the winning lottery ticket, distributing a portion of the proceeds from the selling to the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased, or holding the portion of the proceeds for another drawing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] Embodiments of the present invention will be more readily understood from the following detailed description when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0005] FIG. 1 is an overview of the allocation of tickets to participating entities according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention;

[0006] FIG. 2 is a detailed view of the process after FIG. 1 according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention;

[0007] FIG. 3 is a detailed view of the process of choosing the winning ticket subsequent to the process depicted in FIG. 2 according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention; and

[0008] FIG. 4 is an example of the lottery system according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0009] An embodiment of the invention involves a method and system for conducting a lottery involving a plurality of participating entities. Each participating entity may be assigned an initial allotment of lottery tickets based on an eligible population in the entity. The initial allotment of lottery tickets, however, may be exceeded. Retail locations in each participating entity place the lottery tickets on-sale during a specified time period. Each lottery ticket has a unique identifier. The unique identifier allows the lottery to have a unique winner at each prize level, drawn from a pool of the lottery tickets, that is, no winning tickets for a prize have the same identifier. This assures a potential winner that there will be no split winnings of a prize. There may be several prizes at

any prize level. For example, there may be fifteen drawings for a \$1,000,000 USD prize level in which each of the fifteen winners may receive the \$1,000,000 USD prize.

[0010] Embodiments of the invention reduce the responsibility for those entities who conduct their own individual entity lotteries, reducing cost expenditures associated with conducting an individual lottery, and increasing the revenue streaming from a lottery system for each participating entity.

[0011] With the lottery system and method according to an embodiment of the present invention, individual entities need only to maintain a data store for storing ticket information. A management body may handle the other aspects of running a lottery, thus reducing individual entities' costs of conducting a similar lottery on their own. An example of a management body may be The National Lottery Commission.

[0012] A secondary revenue stream for each participating entity may be created using the described system and method. For example, all lottery ticket proceeds may be stored in an entity escrow account. Each participating entity may retain the interest income generated from the lottery ticket proceeds in the account. In addition, each participating entity may receive a payment for their participation. Participating entities may anticipate the amount of the payment once the management body determines the number of entities participating in a given drawing. The management body may set the entity payment at a higher percentage than other lottery systems to generate more revenue for each participating entity. For example, five percent of the lottery ticket proceeds sold in each participating entity may be the entity payment amount and may be retained by the entity. The management body may also set aside a lottery administrative fee for each entity to advertise the lottery and for other expenses. For example, five percent of the lottery ticket proceeds sold in each participating entity may be the lottery administrative fee for each entity and the entity may retain those funds.

[0013] The management body may determine the amount for which each lottery ticket is sold so that the lottery tickets may generate more revenue per dollar than other traditional lottery products. Due to the greater return according to an embodiment of the invention, participating entities should not be concerned of loss sales attributed to competing lotteries.

[0014] Participating entities may also reduce their budget allocated to lottery advertising. A concern for some entities is the necessity of having to compete with neighboring entity lotteries. Such competing entities tend to allocate a higher advertising budget to encourage individual consumers to participate in a local entity's lottery rather than crossing borders to purchase lottery tickets of a neighboring entity's lottery. Since competition with neighboring entity lotteries is of substantially less concern in the embodiment, participating entities may reduce their lottery advertising budget. It may be likely that all neighboring entities of a participating entity are participating in the lottery system and method according to the present invention. In addition, as stated above, each entity may retain funds from the sale of the lottery tickets to use for advertising the lottery.

[0015] Referring to FIG. 1, there is shown an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, nine entities 102-110 are participating in a given lottery cycle. An example of an entity 102-110 may include, but is not limited to, a state from the United States of America, a province of Canada, etc. A lottery cycle may include a time period beginning when the lottery tickets become available for purchase and ending when a winning lottery ticket is drawn.

There may be a plurality of drawings within each lottery cycle for a grand prize, first prize, second prize, etc. In addition, there may be several lottery cycles in a year. Individual consumers may purchase lottery tickets during each lottery cycle.

[0016] Each participating entity **102-110** may pay an initial onetime membership fee **111A-111I** to participate. The management body may designate the onetime membership fee. Entities may be permitted to skip a lottery cycle and rejoin without additional expense or penalty. Each participating entity **102-110** may be assigned an initial allotment of a number of lottery tickets **112A-112I**. The allotment per entity may vary and may be based on, for example, the eligible population of the entity. The eligible population of an entity includes those individual consumers residing in the entity who are legally able to participate in a lottery. An example of an individual consumer who is able to participate is a person of a legal age. The management body may assign each participating entity an initial allotment of a number of lottery tickets **112A-112I**. Each entity may only sell lottery tickets for their entity and may not sell another entity's lottery tickets. Although each entity is initially assigned an allotment of lottery tickets based on their respective eligible population, in an exemplary embodiment entities may be issued additional lottery tickets for sale corresponding to that particular entity if the entity sells their initial allotment prior to the end of the lottery. For example, Maryland may be assigned 4 million lottery tickets based on an eligible population of 4 million people. Maryland may sell the 4 million lottery tickets and then may additionally sell any number of lottery tickets over the Maryland initial allotment of 4 million lottery tickets.

[0017] If each participating entity sells only their allotment of lottery tickets, the number of lottery tickets **112A-112I** may correspond to the eligible population of each respective entity. Accordingly, the sum of the lottery tickets **112A-112I** may correspond to the total number of lottery tickets **101** sold in the lottery cycle. Since the eligible population can adjust according to variances in the population within the entity, the number of tickets **112A-112I** allotted for that entity might change. Individual consumers in entities with higher eligible populations have no advantage with respect to the prize pool over individual consumers in entities with smaller eligible populations. However, individual consumers in the entities with the smaller eligible population may have the opportunity of participating in a lottery with a prize pool that is larger than that which the entity could generate in its own lottery.

[0018] FIG. 2 shows another example of an embodiment of the invention. In this example, three entities **202-204** are participating in the lottery cycle and there are a total number of lottery tickets **201** for these three entities **202-204**. FIG. 2 shows an example of a process after the initial membership fee **211A-211C** is paid and the allotment of lottery tickets **212A-212C** is made to the participating entities **202-204**. Each participating entity **202-204** makes their allotment of tickets **212A-212C** available for sale during a specified time period **213A-213C** of the lottery cycle. The time period **213A-213C** may be the same for each participating entity **202-204**. A start date and a final end date may be established in advance of the specified period **213A-213C** so that the lottery may be publicized and marketed.

[0019] The duration of the specified time period for the lottery cycle may be any duration. The duration, start date, and final end date may be predetermined by the management body. In one embodiment, the duration may last approximately 4 to 5 months from the start date to the final end date.

The lottery tickets may be made available for sale in each entity at the start date. The lottery tickets may be unavailable for purchase in each participating entity at the final end date.

[0020] At the start date of the specified time period **213A-213C**, participating entities **202-204** make their allotment of lottery tickets **212A-212C** available for sale. Eligible individual consumers may purchase a plurality of tickets. During the specified time period **213A-213C**, each entity may hold the ticket proceeds from the sold lottery tickets. Each entity may hold the lottery ticket proceeds in an account such as an entity escrow account **214A-214C**. Each participating entity **202-204** may have their own escrow account **214A-214C**.

[0021] The lottery tickets may be purchased at existing lottery retail locations within the entity. The management body may provide the necessary materials to each entity to sell lottery tickets.

[0022] Each lottery ticket may contain identifying information. Such identifying information may include, for example, the (1) date and time the ticket was sold, the (2) entity identifier as to where the ticket originated, and a (3) ticket identifier. For example, if the District of Columbia were a participating entity, the tickets from the District of Columbia may use "DC" as the entity identifier of where the ticket was sold. Other participating states may also use the two letter U.S. Post Office state name abbreviation. For instance, New York may use "NY" as the entity identifier and Maryland may use "MD" as the entity identifier on the sold ticket.

[0023] The ticket identifier may be a number, symbol, or character, or any combination thereof. In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, consecutive numbers may be used as the ticket identifier. For example, numbers starting at 1,000,001 may be used for the ticket identifier for each participating entity. Based on the eligible population of the participating entity, the numbers would range from 1,000,001 to the sum of the eligible population of that entity plus 1,000,000.

[0024] For instance, New York may have an eligible population of 18,000,000 and Maryland may have an eligible population of 4,000,000. The ticket identifiers for New York may range from 1,000,001 to 19,000,001 and for Maryland may range from 1,000,001 to 5,000,001. The lottery tickets may be issued in consecutive numbers so that the entity may be aware of how many tickets have been sold at any given time. Each entity may report its sales on a periodic basis to the management body. In combining the entity identifier with the ticket identifier, each lottery ticket may be unique from all the other lottery tickets issued. For example, the lottery ticket with the identifying information of "NY 1,000,001" is different from the lottery ticket with the identifying information of "MD 1,000,001." Millions of tickets may be sold with no duplicates. If an entity sells the initial allotment of lottery tickets, the additional tickets issued may continue to have the appropriate entity identifier.

[0025] Each lottery ticket sold may have the identifying information, such as entity identifier and ticket identifier, stored on an entity data store. An example of an entity data store is a database for each entity. As depicted in FIG. 2, each entity **202-204** may have their own entity data store **215A-215C**.

[0026] FIG. 3 continues the example depicted in FIG. 2. At the expiration of the specified time period **213A-213C**, each entity may transfer a portion of the proceeds of the ticket sales from the entity escrow accounts **314A-314C** into a common account **316**. For example, the lottery ticket proceeds from

each entity may be transferred into an escrow account at a financial institution. As previously stated, each entity may retain an entity lottery retailers commission and an entity lottery administrative fee from the proceeds. The entity lottery administrative fee may be used to advertise the lottery and for other expenses related to the lottery. Any deduction for fees may be based on the total lottery ticket sales. In an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the entity lottery retailers' commission and the entity lottery administrative fee may be approximately five percent each (exclusive of interest). Any interest in the entity escrow account earned until the expiration of the specified time period **213A-213C** may be retained by the respective entity. Each entity may retain other amounts as directed by the law or other rules.

[0027] Each entity may allocate a management fee **318** to pay for the administrative costs relating to the management body functions. An example of such management fee may be five percent of the total ticket sales.

[0028] The financial institution may certify to each participating entity that the prize funds are on deposit and available for distribution. The management body may report to each participating entity the combined sales of the participating entities to certify the prize pool. The prize pool may be a certain percentage of the lottery ticket sales. An example of such percentage may be fifty percent of the lottery ticket sales. There may be several drawings in a given lottery cycle with each drawing deduction a portion of the prize pool. After the above-described deductions, the remaining proceeds are transferred to the common account **316**.

[0029] Once all the participating entities **202-204** have transferred the remaining proceeds and management fee allocation into the common account **316**, certain fees **318-319** may be deducted from the common account **316** as depicted in FIG. 3. The management fee **318** may be deducted from the common account for the management body. As specified above, the management fee **318** may be five percent of the total ticket sales.

[0030] Each participating entity may receive an entity payment **319**. The entity payment **319** may differ for each participating entity. The sum of each entity payment **319** for each participating entity may be a percentage of the total lottery ticket sales. An example of such percentage may be thirty-five percent of the lottery ticket sales to be distributed amongst each participating entity. Each entity may be assigned an entity unit number, which relates to the eligible population of the entity. The entity payment **319** may be proportional to the eligible population of the entity. For example, New York may have an eligible population of 18,000,000 and Maryland may have an eligible population of 4,000,000. The unit number for NY may be 18 and the unit number for Maryland may be 4. New York will have a greater entity payment **319** than Maryland due to the larger unit number for New York.

[0031] The entity payment **319** may be calculated by multiplying the total funds available to the entities as an entity payment by the unit number of the respective entity and dividing by the total eligible population of all participating entities.

[0032] For example, Entity Payment=Total Entity Payment Funds Available*(Entity Unit Number/Total Eligible Population of All Participating Entities)

[0033] The following examples show a complete distribution of the total lottery ticket proceeds. 100,000,000 lottery tickets may be sold in a lottery cycle with each ticket price point being \$20 USD. The total lottery ticket proceeds are

then $100,000,000 * \$20 = \$2,000,000,000$. Ten percent of the total lottery ticket proceeds are allocated among each entity for the entity retailers commission and the entity lottery administrative fee which is $\$2,000,000,000 * 10\% = \$200,000,000$. Five percent of the total lottery ticket proceeds are allocated to the management body fee which is $\$2,000,000,000 * 5\% = \$100,000,000$. Fifty percent is allocated for the prize pool which is $\$2,000,000,000 * 50\% = \$1,000,000,000$. Thirty-five percent is then allocated as the entity payment for all the participating entities which is $2,000,000,000 * 35\% = \$700,000,000$. The total eligible population of all participating entities may be 188 million people. If New York has a unit number of 18, then the entity payment for New York will be as follows:

[0034] New York Entity Payment = $\$700,000,000 * (18/188) = \$67,021,276.59$.

Accordingly, Maryland may have an entity payment as follows:

[0035] Maryland Entity Payment = $\$700,000,000 * (4/188) = \$14,893,617.02$.

Accordingly, all participating entities may share in the lottery ticket proceeds systematically based on the unit number of the entity and the eligible population of the entity.

[0036] At the end of the expiration of the specified time period **213A-213C**, each participating entity may relay the identifying information stored on each entity database **315A-315C** into a common data store **317** such as a common database. The common data store **317** may include the identifying information of the lottery tickets sold from each participating entity **315A-315C**. After all the fees **318, 319** are deducted from the common account **316** as depicted in **320**, the remaining proceeds may be the prize proceeds **322** for a plurality of different drawings. Once the prize proceeds **322** are ready for disbursement, a single lottery ticket may be selected as the winning lottery ticket **321** for each drawing. In an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a nationally recognized accounting and drawing firm may conduct the drawing.

[0037] Once a winning lottery ticket **321** is selected for the given drawing, a determination must be made as to whether a winner claims the prize **323**. The winner of the winning lottery ticket may have a certain window of time to claim the prize. If the winner **325** comes forward to claim the prize, the winner **325** receives the prize money **327** from the common account **316** holding a percentage of the prize proceeds **322** for that drawing. If no one **324** comes forward to claim the prize in the certain window of time, the prize money may remain in the common account **316** to be used for the next drawing **326** including any interest accumulated. In another embodiment, if no one **324** comes forward to claim the prize in the certain window of time, the prize money may be alternatively distributed to each participating entity based on their NL Unit numbers or alternatively the prize money may be distributed to the entity from which the winning lottery ticket was sold.

[0038] As stated above, there may be several drawings per given lottery cycle. In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, there may be 1 grand prize of \$500 million USD, 1 first prize of \$300 million USD, 1 second prize of \$100 million USD, 15 third prizes of \$3.33 million USD, 100,000 fourth prizes of \$100 USD, and 8 early bird prizes at \$5 million USD. In this exemplary embodiment of the invention, there may be 100,026 winners to win the prize pool.

[0039] The early bird prizes may be allocated for entrants that purchase lottery tickets before an early date marker in the

specified time period of the lottery. An example of an early date marker may be the end of the first 30 days of the lottery cycle. If an individual consumer player wins an early bird prize, the individual consumer player may still be eligible to win the other prizes drawn later in the lottery cycle. In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, if an individual consumer wins a prize other than the early bird, then the lottery ticket of the individual consumer player does not enter into subsequent drawings. In another exemplary embodiment of the invention, if an individual consumer player wins a prize other than the early bird, then the lottery ticket of the individual consumer player may enter into subsequent drawings.

[0040] Since only a unique winning lottery ticket 321 is chosen per drawing, the management body may guarantee the prize pool with specified amounts per drawing and no split winnings. As described above, the prize pool is a pre-determined amount of prize money stated at the commencement of the draw. The amount of the prize money must be guaranteed to be available from the start date. Each entity may provide a percentage of the prize pool and the management body may use a third party to provide any necessary guarantees. With a drawing of a winner, the prize may be awarded regardless of the number of tickets required to be sold in order to generate funds for the prize pool. In any given drawing, an entity may not reach their expected sales goal while another entity may exceed their expected sales goal. Since the prize designation is not determined by the number of tickets sold, the number of tickets sold is germane to the profits. It is a design of lottery to assure that the lottery ticket sales for the drawings, are an easily attainable percentage of the total drawing prize.

[0041] FIG. 4 shows an example of the lottery system according to an embodiment of the present invention. The management body 400 may assign a plurality of entities 202-204 respective allotments of lottery tickets. The allotment may correspond to the number of eligible people in each participating entity able to participate in a lottery. The management body may oversee the drawing of a winning lottery ticket and the distribution of proceeds, among other things. As described above, the lottery tickets have unique identifying information so that each lottery ticket is different and there is a unique winning lottery ticket for a given prize drawing. The plurality of entities 202-204 may make the lottery tickets available for sale during the specified time period through the use of retailers 402-403. The retailers 402-404 may sell the lottery tickets to an eligible population 401. The eligible population 401 may purchase tickets in any participating entity and are not restricted to the entity in which they may reside.

[0042] The above description of the present invention is susceptible to various modifications, changes and adaptations, and the same are intended to be comprehended within the meaning and range of equivalents of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A lottery method, comprising:

- assigning a plurality of entities respective allotments of lottery tickets, wherein each allotment of lottery tickets for each respective entity corresponds to a number of eligible people in the entity;
- selling the lottery tickets in each respective entity, wherein each lottery ticket comprises a unique lottery identifier;
- selecting a winning lottery ticket from a combination of the lottery tickets; and
- distributing a portion of proceeds from the selling to a winner having the winning lottery ticket, distributing a

portion of the proceeds from the selling to the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased, or holding the portion of the proceeds for another drawing.

2. A lottery method according to claim 1, further comprising:

- storing ticket information about each lottery ticket on an entity data store for each respective entity.

3. A lottery method according to claim 1, further comprising:

- holding the proceeds of each lottery ticket sold in an entity escrow account for each respective entity.

4. A lottery method according to claim 3, further comprising:

- transferring a majority of the proceeds in each entity escrow account into a specified common account, wherein the specified common account holds the portion of the proceeds to be set aside for the winning lottery ticket.

5. A lottery method according to claim 4, further comprising:

- distributing a management fee from the specified common account to a management body; and
- distributing an entity payment from the specified common account to each respective entity.

6. A lottery method according to claim 1, wherein the selecting comprises choosing from the combination of the lottery tickets which are sold.

7. A lottery method according to claim 1, wherein the selecting comprises choosing a plurality of unique winners for a plurality of drawings.

8. A lottery method according to claim 1, wherein the selling is during a specified time period.

9. A lottery method according to claim 4, wherein the selling is during a specified time period and the transferring is conducted at an expiration of the specified time period.

10. A lottery method according to claim 2, further comprising transmitting the ticket information from each entity data store to a common data store, wherein the common data store comprises the combination of the lottery ticket identifiers of the lottery tickets.

11. A lottery method according to claim 10, wherein the drawing is conducted from the lottery ticket identifiers stored at the common data store.

12. A lottery method according to claim 5, further comprising dispensing an amount of the entity payment proportional to the eligible population of the entity.

13. A lottery method according to claim 1, wherein the assigning a plurality of entities a discrete number of lottery tickets comprises entities from a state of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, and a Commonwealth of the United States of America.

14. A lottery system, comprising:

- a management body to assign a plurality of entities respective allotments of lottery tickets, wherein each allotment of lottery tickets for each respective entity corresponds to a number of eligible people in the entity able to participate in a lottery, wherein the management body oversees a drawing for a winning lottery ticket for the drawing from a combination of the lottery tickets which are sold, and wherein the management body (a) oversees a distribution of a portion of proceeds from a sale of the lottery tickets for the drawing to a winner of the drawings having the winning lottery ticket for the drawing, (b) oversees a distribution of a portion of the proceeds

from the lottery tickets sold to the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased, or (c) oversees that a particular financial institution holds the portion of the proceeds for another drawing; and
 a retailer to sell the lottery tickets to an eligible population, wherein each lottery ticket comprises a unique lottery identifier.

15. A lottery system according to claim 14, further comprising:
 an entity data store for each respective entity to store ticket information about each lottery ticket sold.

16. A lottery system according to claim 14, further comprising:
 an entity escrow account at a financial institution for each respective entity to hold the proceeds of each lottery ticket sold.

17. A lottery system according to claim 16, further comprising:
 a specified common account at the particular financial institution to receive a majority of the proceeds in each entity escrow account, wherein the specified common account holds the portion of the proceeds to be set aside for the winning lottery ticket of the drawing.

18. A lottery system according to claim 17, wherein the management body distributes a management fee from the specified common account to the management body and distributes an entity payment from the specified common account to each respective entity.

19. A lottery system according to claim 14, wherein the management body assigns each lottery ticket a specified price.

20. A lottery system according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of retailers sell the lottery tickets during a specified time period.

21. A lottery system according to claim 17, wherein the plurality of retailers transfer the proceeds from the lottery tickets at an expiration of the specified time period.

22. A lottery system according to claim 15, wherein the management body oversees a transmission of the ticket information from each entity data store to a common data store, wherein the common data store comprises the combination of the lottery identifiers of the lottery tickets sold in each entity and the drawing is from the common data store.

23. A lottery system according to claim 18, wherein the entity payment for each respective entity corresponds proportionally to the eligible population of the respective entity.

24. A lottery system according to claim 14, wherein the plurality of entities comprises entities from a state of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, and a Commonwealth of the United States of America.

25. A lottery system, comprising:
 a plurality of entities to make available for sale a discrete number of lottery tickets, wherein the discrete number of

lottery tickets for each respective entity corresponds to a predetermined number, wherein each lottery ticket comprises a unique identifier;
 a retailer to sell the lottery tickets;
 a management body to draw one winning lottery ticket in a drawing from the discrete number of lottery tickets, wherein the management body oversees a distribution of proceeds from the sale of lottery tickets to any or a combination of: (1) a winner of the drawing having the winning lottery ticket, (2) the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased of the one of the plurality of drawing, and (3) an account for another drawing.

26. A lottery method, comprising:
 assigning a plurality of entities a discrete number of lottery tickets, wherein the number corresponds to a predetermined number, wherein each lottery ticket comprises a unique lottery identifier;
 selling the lottery tickets at a specified price to the eligible population during a specified time period by retailer located in each one of the plurality of entities;
 storing ticket information about each lottery ticket sold in each entity on an entity data store for each entity;
 holding proceeds of each lottery ticket sold in an entity account for each entity;
 transferring the ticket information from each entity data store into a common data store;
 transferring a majority of the proceeds in each entity account into a common account at an expiration of the specified time period;
 distributing a management fee from the common account to a management body;
 distributing an entity payment from the common account to each participating entity, wherein the entity payment corresponds to the eligible population of the entity;
 selecting a lottery identifier from the common data store in the drawing, wherein the selecting is by a firm; and
 distributing the remaining proceeds to a winner of the drawing having the winning lottery ticket for the drawing, the respective entity where the winning lottery ticket was purchased, or an escrow account for another drawing.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein the selecting of the lottery identifier of the drawing is at a designated early-bird time which is at a date prior to a date of a second drawing, wherein the lottery identifier of the drawing at the designated early-bird time is also entered into the second drawing.

28. A method according to claim 27, wherein the designated early-bird time is thirty days after the specified time period begins.

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