

Drawmaster can produce cartoon-like animation

By Michael Quigley (c) 1985
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Drawmaster is a disk-based, machine language "graphics package" for the 64. It can store multiple screens of artwork and display these screens in a preselected order, thus producing effects like cartoon animation.

With Drawmaster, you use either a joystick or a Koala Pad for creating designs. The work space where pictures are made does not fill the entire 64 screen, since lines above and below this area are reserved for messages and text. Drawmaster's "paint brush" varies in size from a crosshair to a large box in steps which are not as gradual as might be wished. You can draw lines from one point to another with a special command, create circles and ellipses and fill in outlines. You can also use all 16 of the 64's colors.

When Drawmaster is booted up, the first option you receive is whether or not to format (NEW) a data disk. Doing so permits no choice of name or ID, with the result that all disks are called "Drawmaster Data" with an ID of I8. Formatting a disk, aside from saving and loading, is the only DOS command allowed. It isn't possible to view the directory, so you have to re-

ly on your memory if you don't want to exit to BASIC by turning the computer off and on again.

Up to 32 screens with corresponding text can be saved at once with Drawmaster. Each set of screens is saved to disk in four separate program files. Their total size ranges from a minimum of 36 blocks or about 9150 bytes of disk storage to a maximum of 150 blocks or 38 K, depending on the complexity of the pictures. The hi-res screens are created in memory starting at hex \$4000 (16384 decimal). Because of their organization and dimensions, they are not easily compatible with other 64 drawing programs.

I found some of Drawmaster's commands not particularly "user friendly." The four function keys are used to change the shape and speed of the "paint brush" as well as to select colors in a relatively straightforward manner. Most commands, however, are executed with the Commodore key in combination with other keys. Some of these are mnemonically organized like Commodore-C for "clear screen," but others are less logical. Commodore-up arrow loads pictures from disk and Commodore-! deletes pictures from the work area. Commodore-S means "save picture," but this command saves the picture to the next

free page in the computer's memory. This is different to saving to disk, which is accomplished with Commodore-*

Drawmaster's animation commands are its most positive feature. You can run through a sequence of screens in a particular order, and each picture can be given instructions to WAIT (how long to pause), GOTO and REPEAT. There are three demonstration programs on the disk. Two of these feature entertainment and educational applications, while the third is a series of world maps.

One thing I didn't like was that there is no "erase" command. In order to remove something, you have to make the "paint brush" the same color as the screen and retrace your previous steps. Depending on the complexity of your original drawing, this can prove an exacting task. Another negative feature is that pictures created cannot be dumped out to a printer.

Still, for those with the patience to create works of art with their 64, Drawmaster provides excellent possibilities for use in advertising and for educational or business presentations with its animation mode.

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