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The Commodore 64 In Action

Sound, Graphics & Filing

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First published 1984 by
Higher and Further Education Division
MACMILLAN PUBLISHERS LTD
London and Basingstoke
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

Typeset in Great Britain by
RDL Artset, Sutton, Surrey

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Novak, M. M.

The Commodore 64 in action.

1. Commodore 64 (Computer) — Programming
2. Computer sound processing 3. Computer graphics

I. Title

001.64'43 QA76.8.C64

ISBN 978-1-349-07508-9

ISBN 978-1-349-07506-5 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-07506-5

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Preface

Although the Commodore 64 is, at the time of writing, one of the most versatile microcomputers in its category, the ways of utilising its many excellent features are not always well explained. The *User Manual* supplied with the computer is rather rudimentary. The general aim of this book is to begin where that manual finishes. While writing it, I have assumed no prior knowledge about the Commodore 64 than the information given in the manual. Although this book is written for beginners, some prior knowledge of computing would be advantageous.

Those who are relatively new to computing should benefit from reading chapter 1. Several concepts essential for effective use of the machine are introduced there. Various types of items that the Commodore 64 can use, together with possible operations between them, are considered. Binary numbers that are especially needed in graphics and sound are also discussed there. Some means of eliminating errors from the programs are also dealt with.

The Commodore 64 is well suited for some business applications. Chapter 2 provides an elementary introduction to computer files. It describes the structure of sequential and relative files and shows how these may be combined to build a filing system.

One of the strongest features of the Commodore 64 is Graphics. There are various means to display a character on the screen. The different ways available are presented and form the first part of chapter 3. The second part deals with the high-resolution mode. This mode enables you to produce displays with much finer detail. Although the techniques are somewhat more difficult than in the low-resolution mode, the resulting image will greatly repay your efforts.

Most of chapter 4 is devoted to sprites. These are high-resolution blocks that can be easily manipulated. In addition, this chapter shows how to create your own characters.

The quality of sound on the Commodore 64 is very high. It may be a little cumbersome to produce, say, a single note, but after reading chapter 5 you should be well on the way to program your own music. All the necessary concepts are discussed and clarified using simple examples.

Other equipment than the TV can be connected to the Commodore 64. Some ways of using the most common devices are given in chapter 6. Two programs in this chapter will allow you to produce a copy of text as well as graphics screens on your printer.

All the vocabulary available on the Commodore 64 is listed in appendix 1. In addition, a brief description of the Simons' BASIC follows it. A collection of useful tables completes this book.

April 1984

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Bristol

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to D. Camilleri who, by knowing little about computing, helped greatly in presenting topics in this book.

In addition, my sincere thanks go to Malcolm J. Stewart and Jon Finegold of Macmillan whose help and advice is very much appreciated.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank Gail P. Wellington of Commodore (UK) Ltd, for assistance given during preparation of this book and for permission to reproduce copyright material.