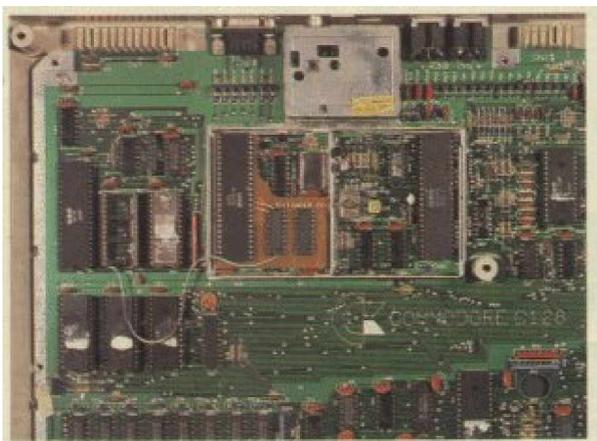


C-128 GRAPHIC BOOSTER

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The following Article is taken from the German Computer magazine 'RUN', issue: November'87, Pages 104/105.

- Translation German --> English by Jan Neuvians.
- Click on an image to get a larger view



The C128 finally shows what has been previously proofed for the C64: Its capabilities appear to be much higher than originally intended. The constant awaiting of new Computer generations tends to leave most older machines partly undiscovered in regard of their expand ability and usability. Quite a shame, as many of these older Computers carry numerous surprises just waiting to be revealed. As most Computer manufacturers are not known for their enthusiastic development of Hardware upgrades, more likely that they are surprised about what their machine is capable of when a little tuning is done, we can state ourselves lucky that there are specialists out there who are eager to get the most out of their machines.

After one year of intense development Thomas Giger from Solothurn, Switzerland has accomplished something that even Commodore believed to be impossible: Graphics with a resolution of 720 * 720 on a C128. That is twice as much as what the standard Graphic adapter 'Hercules' for IBM-PCs is capable of, and it is in colour and easily programmed in Basic. There is actually no other system below 10.000 DM available which is capable of anything comparable to this.



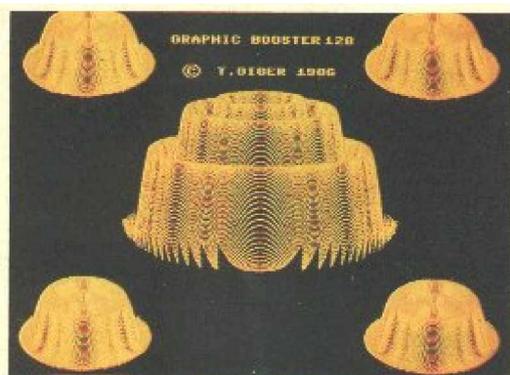
With Graphic-Booster (Pic. 1) the C128 becomes the cheapest CAD-system available world wide. Text modes display in IBM standards (1987) with 43 rows. Fore- and background colours can be chosen from a palette of several hundred. Further going special colour fading effects (Pic. 2) are possible and several resolutions can easily be chosen via software. Up to 400 pixels horizontally can be displayed absolutely flicker free. Anything above 400 shows a little flicker as Interlaced modes are used, but the flicker is far below anything known from the Amiga . On a colour Monitor the Interlace mode displays perfectly.

Graphic-Booster 128 works two Displays simultaneously. On is a TV-set or a 40-Column Monitor and the other a 80-Column colour or green Monitor. As known fact, the C128 provides the necessary ports.

New Basic Commands for better Graphics

After loading the software, you choose your preferred working resolution from an menu. Following resolutions are available: 720 * 720 (Pic. 3), 640 * 720 and 640 * 650 pixels. In addition you choose either one or two Monitors to work with.

After that you can freely begin programming in Basic V7.0. The Program supplies several new graphic commands for 640 * 720/360, 720 * 700/350 pixels and for monochrome Monitors 640 * 400 and 720 * 400 Pixels.



The commands can be entered and tested in direct command mode. A command to display a 'Bulls Eye' for instance would be:

```
For I=0 to 200 Step 10: Circle, 360, 350, I, I: Next
```

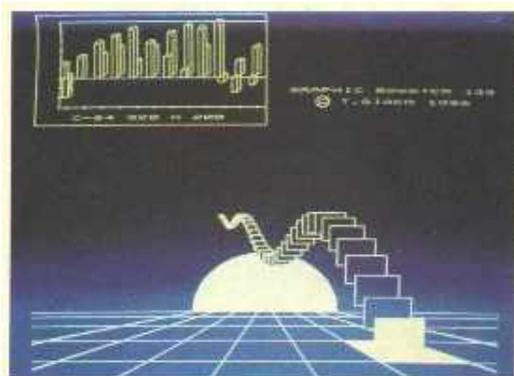
The advantage of using two monitors in direct mode is that any change to the parameters display immediately on the monitor with the output screen. If graphic calculations are too slow for you, you can use the `Fast` and `Slow` commands respectively to swap into 2MHz mode. Calculations and drawing are now done twice as fast! Of course these commands work in direct command mode as well as in program code.

If you are satisfied with your results you just need to add a line number in front of your tested command to use your direct mode command in your program code. This just shows how easily you can now archive a neat collection of formulas and functions.

However if you only have one monitor to work with it is still possible to switch between graphics output and text mode without losing the output.

Following problem is easily solved by the Graphic Booster: You have edited an A4 Sheet with Star Painter but you are the unfortunate owner of a MPS 802 Printer. Rather than wait for more the half an hour just to check if it came out right, you can now comfortably preview the whole page on your screen in high resolution. (Pic. 4) Just remember those pathetic previews in 160 * 200 pixels you normally get. It's all over with that.

With the adaption to Star Painter you can preview your work within three seconds and add corrections if necessary. Apart from that you can now work at times where you don't have to worry about waking your neighbours by any printing noise.



Rather than waiting such a long time for a hardcopy and waste paper, you can display a softcopy on your monitor. In other words: Desktop Publishing has finally found its way to the C128! Apart from Star painter other programs have been adapted or are still in work.

The Graphic-Booster is simply plugged into the computer, no soldering is necessary. There should be no reason ever to remove it again as it is completely neutral to the other hardware and your machine stays 100% compatible.

By these means the C128 is upgraded to a machine which can match up to the Amiga regarding the graphic capabilities. The Graphic-Booster 128 ships for 174.- DM + Sales Tax available at:

Combo AG
Tugginerweg 3
4500 Solothurn
Switzerland
Tel.: +41-65-232686

Detailed Information is also available there.

In the near future this company will also ship the Editor Booster 128 which will feature further resolution enhancements for the Basic-Editor screen and the integrated disassembler gaining a better ergonomic view for the user. The Editor Booster 128 will be based on the same graphic enhancements.