Subject: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by ravi on Mon, 03 Jun 2013 02:40:38 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Mon, 17-Dec-84 17:26:58 EST
Article-I.D.: eneevax.212
Posted: Mon Dec 17 17:26:58 1984
Date-Received: Wed, 19-Dec-84 02:16:55 EST
Distribution: net
Organization: U of Maryland, EE Dept., College Park, MD
Lines: 26

I have noticed several comments in this newsgroup stating that
the graphics on the atari is superior to the c64. I personally
have a c64 although today the atari is a better buy. However, I
always thought that the c64 had better graphics and sound
hardware than the atari. I realize that for basic programming
the atari graphics and sound is very easy to use since the
keywords are built into basic. But for applications programs
and games the c64 seems to have the edge. It has 16 colors in
the hi res mode (limited to two different colors in any 8x8 block)
vs only 2 shades for the atari. The sprites in the c64 can be
moved in the x and y directions where as the player missiles
in the atari can only be moved horizontally. The sound chip on
the c64 is a real synthesizer with ADSR features, filtering, the
ability to modulate one voice with another, and external input
as compared with atari's more primitive distortion parameters.
I have heard that the 800XL's have a newer antic chip that
allows more graphics modes, but on the surface at least the
c64 seems to have the edge. I am sure that there are some arguments
for the atari that I may have missed and I would enjoy hearing
more pro's and con's about the two machines.

--
ARPA: eneevax!ravi@maryland
UUCP: [seismo,allegra]!umcp-cs!eneevax!ravi

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by dlm on Mon, 03 Jun 2013 02:40:39 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Wed, 19-Dec-84 16:03:35 EST
Article-I.D.: piggy.282
Posted: Wed Dec 19 16:03:35 1984
Date-Received: Thu, 20-Dec-84 23:40:22 EST
References:
Distribution: net
Organization: AT&T Bell Laboratories - Holmdel, NJ
Lines: 23

Couldn't let this go by...

The ATARI player/missle graphics may not scroll vertically, but they have
the 'feature' of being able to cover the entire screen, top to bottom, in
the 8 pixel horizontal range. Although this is more difficult to scroll
up and down, it is more flexible.

It is true that there is no attack/decay in the atari voice system, but
there are 4 true voices vs the c64 3+1 white noise. The atari voices can
also be clocked by various sources, and can even be combined into fewer
voices for a wider range.

The c64 8x8 block garbage is hardly flexible. I prefer a standard bit map,
although less colorful, and work with artifacting in a straight forward
manner. I have seen the documentation on the c64 graphics system and
the 800 is far superior in capability overall, especially the display
list system. I don't believe the c64 has anything like the powerful atari
display list processor.

Daryl Monge
AT&T Bell Labs
Holmdel, NJ
..!ihnp4!piggy!dlm

_____

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by keithd on Mon, 03 Jun 2013 02:40:41 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Thu, 20-Dec-84 15:01:57 EST
Article-I.D.: cadovax.340
Posted: Thu Dec 20 15:01:57 1984
Date-Received: Sun, 23-Dec-84 01:22:03 EST

References:
Organization: Contel Cado, Torrance, CA
Lines: 77

[color=blue]> I have noticed several comments in this newsgroup stating that[/color]
[color=blue]> the graphics on the atari is superior to the c64. I personally[/color]
[color=blue]> have a c64 although today the atari is a better buy. However, I[/color]
[color=blue]> always thought that the c64 had better graphics and sound[/color]
[color=blue]> hardware than the atari. I realize that for basic programming[/color]
[color=blue]> the atari graphics and sound is very easy to use since the[/color]
[color=blue]> keywords are built into basic. But for applications programs[/color]
[color=blue]> and games the c64 seems to have the edge. It has 16 colors in[/color]
[color=blue]> the hi res mode (limited to two different colors in any 8x8 block)[/color]
[color=blue]> vs only 2 shades for the atari. The sprites in the c64 can be[/color]
[color=blue]> moved in the x and y directions where as the player missiles[/color]
[color=blue]> in the atari can only be moved horizontally. The sound chip on[/color]
[color=blue]> the c64 is a real synthesizer with ADSR features, filtering, the[/color]
[color=blue]> ability to modulate one voice with another, and external input[/color]
[color=blue]> as compared with atari's more primitive distortion parameters.[/color]
[color=blue]> I have heard that the 800XL's have a newer antic chip that[/color]
[color=blue]> allows more graphics modes, but on the surface at least the[/color]
[color=blue]> c64 seems to have the edge. I am sure that there are some arguments[/color]
[color=blue]> for the atari that I may have missed and I would enjoy hearing[/color]
[color=blue]> more pro's and con's about the two machines.[/color]

Some of these features are hard to compare. Your description of
the Commodore '16 colors in hi res' obviously has limitations,
(only 2 in any 8x8 etc.) The Atari features are different and
may also have limitations. True, the Atari technically only has
2 colors in hi-res, but with proper use of the display list, you
can have 128 colors (or is it 256?), limited to two different
shades on any raster line. With the display list, you can mix
graphics and text modes on the screen like crazy, ie: a screen
with 1. four raster lines of hi-res, then 2. a text line, then
3. 20 pixel lines at medium res, etc. ad infinitum (or at least
until the bottom of the screen) The display list will also
facilitate scrolling of all or part of the screen either
horizontally or vertically without moving any of the actual
data. Display list interrupts can be used to divide the 4 (actually
5) players into seperate entities, provided they only move horizontally.
(actually you might even be able to do vertical movement like this with
some cute tricks). In this way, each of the 5 players could be divided
into up to 192 individual horizontal moving 'sprites'. Of course at
192, each sprite is 8 horizontal by 1 vertical. Collision detection
is built in for player-player, player-background, etc. but I suppose
the Commodore may have this feature. I've heard nothing about any
display-list type features in the C64. If there are any, I'd like to

hear about them.

I must admit though, the Atari sound generators are not particularly impressive. The best feature is that there are 4 of them and you can combine them for more sophisticated effects. The worst feature is that there is only 1 'tone' while there are 7 'noises'. The 1 'tone' is approximately a sine wave, so you don't have much control over timber. You can change the clock rate to the generators in order to drop to lower octaves (more bass!) and you can inter-combine them in some odd ways that I haven't gotten around to experimenting with. I don't particularly miss an ADSR, as this is a slow enough function that it can be 'simulated' with a clock interrupt routine. (nice not to have to do it that way though) One feature however, is the volume-only mode, where you turn off the sound generators, and use the volume control as a 4 bit D/A. S.A.M. uses this for it's speech synthesis output, and does an excellent job, however, you have to turn off all interrupts and DMA etc. because they affect the timing adversely. This means a blank screen when you use this sound feature.

I don't know much about the C64 except it has 32 sprites. I guess it just uses the T.I. 9918? (no display list or associated interrupts). All I know about the sound generators is what was said in the above referenced article.

I would like to know what versions of FORTH people are using on the C64. I use it exclusively for Atari programs, and would like to know what the best commercially available C64 version is.

Keith Doyle
{ucbvax,ihnp4,decvax}!trwrb!cadovax!keithd
"You'll PAY to know what you REALLY think!"

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by doug on Tue, 04 Jun 2013 03:22:55 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Thu, 10-Jan-85 19:09:47 EST
Article-I.D.: terak.260
Posted: Thu Jan 10 19:09:47 1985
Date-Received: Mon, 14-Jan-85 02:47:33 EST
References:
Organization: Terak Corporation, Scottsdale, AZ, USA

Lines: 84

Since nobody else jumped in...

[color=blue]> the Commodore '16 colors in hi res' obviously has limitations,[/color]
[color=blue]> (only 2 in any 8x8 etc.) The Atari features are different and[/color]
[color=blue]> may also have limitations. True, the Atari technically only has[/color]
[color=blue]> 2 colors in hi-res, but with proper use of the display list, you[/color]
[color=blue]> can have 128 colors (or is it 256?), limited to two different[/color]
[color=blue]> shades on any raster line. [/color]

In the max-resolution mode (320X200 bit-mapped) the C-64 is as noted.
Since the color data is picked up by the video chip only once every
8 raster lines, there is no way to change it on a per-raster-line basis.
Also, the bit-map is NOT in a logical order.

[color=blue]> With the display list, you can mix[/color]
[color=blue]> graphics and text modes on the screen like crazy, ie: a screen[/color]
[color=blue]> with 1. four raster lines of hi-res, then 2. a text line, then[/color]
[color=blue]> 3. 20 pixel lines at medium res, etc. ad infinitum (or at least[/color]
[color=blue]> until the bottom of the screen)[/color]

Ditto on the C-64.

[color=blue]> The display list will also [/color]
[color=blue]> facilitate scrolling of all or part of the screen either[/color]
[color=blue]> horizontally or vertically without moving any of the actual[/color]
[color=blue]> data.[/color]

The C-64 can do this without display lists. It does require that
the screen be "shrunk" -- 24 lines for vertical smooth scroll,
38 columns for horizontal smooth scroll.

[color=blue]> Display list interrupts can be used to divide the 4 (actually[/color]
[color=blue]> 5) players into seperate entities, provided they only move horizontally.[/color]
[color=blue]> (actually you might even be able to do vertical movement like this with[/color]
[color=blue]> some cute tricks). In this way, each of the 5 players could be divided[/color]
[color=blue]> into up to 192 individual horizontal moving 'sprites'. Of course at[/color]
[color=blue]> 192, each sprite is 8 horizontal by 1 vertical.[/color]

The C-64 has 8 sprites which can be moved vertically as well as
horizontally, each sprite being up to 24 pixels wide by 21 high, with
the ability to "double" pixels in either or both dimensions. "High
res" sprites have only one color each, (the "second" color being
"transparent"), medium-res sprites (where the 24 pixels are made
into 12 double-width pixels) can have 3 colors, one for each
sprite plus two "common" colors shared by all sprites. All of the
things that an Atari display list can do are also applicable to

the C-64.

[color=blue]> Collision detection[/color]
[color=blue]> is built in for player-player, player-background, etc. but I suppose[/color]
[color=blue]> the Commodore may have this feature.[/color]

It does. Also priority -- what is seen when sprites overlap each
other. Sprite 0 always covers sprite 1 ... sprite 6 covers sprite 7.
Normally any sprite covers background, but this can be changed for
any and all sprites.

[color=blue]> I've heard nothing about any[/color]
[color=blue]> display-list type features in the C64. If there are any, I'd like to[/color]
[color=blue]> hear about them.[/color]

The C-64 has a "raster line interrupt" which will produce an interrupt
at any selected raster line. This gives essentially the same facility
as Atari display lists.

While this all sounds very impressive on the C-64 side, I feel obliged
to point out that "features" and "quality" don't necessarily go
together. The quality of the video that the C-64 presents is
terrible. The only way to get a watchable picture is to use the
Commodore monitor.

[color=blue]> I don't know much about the C64 except it has 32 sprites. I guess it[/color]
[color=blue]> just uses the T.I. 9918? (no display list or associated interrupts).[/color]

Only 8 sprites. It uses the MOS Techonology (a division of Commodore)
6567 VIC-II video chip.

[color=blue]> All I know about the sound generators is what was said in the above[/color]
[color=blue]> referenced article.[/color]

The sound synthesizers in the C-64 really are the best there is. If
sound is what matters to you, you needn't look farther.

Doug Pardee -- Terak Corp. -- !{hao,ihnp4,decvax}!noao!terak!doug

---

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by pjm on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:13 GMT
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Message-ID:

OK OK OK

I have c64 and I think that it and the atari are
fairly similar although i give the edge to the 64 especially
since it is STILL a very popular machine and I think the
best in terms of both expansion and software is yet to come.

The comparision that everyone is missing, however is PRIIICE!!!
When I decided to buy a computer (the vic20 was out) the main
choices were between the apple 2 line and the atari 800 (the
400 was not even a cinsideration).

What did I face the apple for well over $1200 or the atari 800
at around $800. Yes, thats right. Lets not forget that when
CBM introduced the 64K c64 the 48K apples and ataris were
selling at the above prices.

Is it any wonder that it became so popular???

It was only after the 64 became fairly established that
atari and apple started coming out with their own
64K machines and then the famous price wars started.
Bt then, however, Commodore was already well on the way to
becoming king of the hill.

By the way the TI99/4a at the time was still pretty close
to a thousand dollars.

No matter what you like or dislike about the 64 lets give
credit where credit is due. Before it became available
apple and atari were charging twice as much for machines
that were at best very similar to the 64 and at worst
somewhat inferior.

I prsonally say thanks Commodore for giving me an affordable
alternative and for making everybody improve their computers
while lowering their prices.

If anyone disagrees I'd sure like to know why

Paul Maioriello
ATTIS
spuxll!pjm

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by dpa on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:13 GMT

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Message-ID:
Date: Wed, 16-Jan-85 23:22:44 EST
Article-I.D.: snow.329
Posted: Wed Jan 16 23:22:44 1985
Date-Received: Wed, 23-Jan-85 08:01:44 EST
References:
Organization: Computer Science Department, Warwick University, UK
Lines: 62

I've been reading all these comparisons and I own a c64.
I think that straight comparison is out, there are too many
basic differances.
For a start the Atari machines have a display processor of sorts,
that make the video very powerful, but the c64 has a versatile
video controller that can tell the processor when to do things,
via the raster interrupt, and thus if you wanted
you could change video modes on every line also.
This uses a lot of main processor time if used in many screen locations
but can be used to give many effects not available using the display
file on an Atari,for example a one line pixel scrolling message anywhere
on the screen.
The disk interface speed in now effectively cured, with small
alternative loaders. It now takes about 20sec to load 32k instead of
1min30sec that it takes normally, since Atari use serial interfacing
as well, I would assume that their disk speed is slower than this.
As for memory, I can't compare the XL machines with the c64 since
I'm not sure of the facts, but almost all commercial software is capable
of access to the entire 64k of memory.
Sound, the Atari relies on fixed oscillators with which one can only
make beeping noises (directly), the c64 has a synth which does more
than most other people mentioned. For a start you have a choice of wave-
form on all voices, this is for harmonic control. Triangle waves produce
the least harmonics and sound more like most wind instruments,
Sawtooth are very quite high up in harmonics, and pulse wave forms

are like most other micro beeps except you can change the step/mark
ratio. Finally there is the white noise generator, this is just another
optional wave form, so can be used on all voices(unlike what others
said). Next are the filters, there are digitally controlled
high,low and band pass filters which can be used to make tinny
sounds or bass sounds or whatever. Other features include
ring modulation, hard sync., envelope shaping, A to D converter
on voice 3, plus much more. I have heard very good speach synthesis
on the c64 with no extra hard-ware(it really sounds like a person.)
Graphics are next, the Atari highest mode is higher than that of
the c64 I think, but what makes graphics in games is colour.
The Atari is lousy at having a good range of colour on the screen
at once, with careful planning on a c64 there is no reason
why you can't use all 16 colours where you want when you want them,
i.e. no trouble getting more than 2 colours on one raster line.
The Atari sprites appear to be very limited too, why would one
want a sprite filling the whole screen? Admittedly there are only
8 sprites on the c64, but with the raster interrupts running
then any number can be used, and they CAN move in both directions.
Software, this is where my favorite machine starts looking a
little low, unfortunately where there are the same games on both
the Atari and the c64 the c64 looks worse off, I can see no real
reason why this is so, but I can only guess by saying that all of it
was originally written on the Atari and then made to work on the c64.
Thus when it designed all the graphics etc. were made to fit the Atari
in particular and it was hard to move. Where software was made for
the c64 (see Impossible Mission or Space Taxi) the quality is the
best.
In the case of support all I can say is that in England, where I live,
Atari seems to have vanished, and there appears to be no support whatever
despite all the Net News saying the 800XL is only about $120 over in
America.

  Dave (Maths @ Warwick University, UK)

P.S. These views are probably very biased. Who cares, flame me, I love
seeing pages of mail to me, etc..

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by dpa on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:14 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Wed, 16-Jan-85 23:31:40 EST

Article-I.D.: snow.330
Posted: Wed Jan 16 23:31:40 1985
Date-Received: Wed, 23-Jan-85 08:30:44 EST
References:
Organization: Computer Science Department, Warwick University, UK
Lines: 13

A few points I missed:-

Commodore use their own video controller.
Interrupts are a major feature in the video (raster,collision etc.)
There is collision checking,(background and foreground plus a possible
foreground colour that is transparent for collisions).
The sound chip (SID) has a (maybe more) 4 bit D to A output also.
It also has an input that gets filtered if you desire (i.e. tape).
I have had 48 24*21 sprites on the screen at the same time.
The c64 has three Forth compilers available at my last count, plus
one full Pascal implementation.

  Dave.

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by keithd on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:16 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Mon, 21-Jan-85 16:18:50 EST
Article-I.D.: cadovax.363
Posted: Mon Jan 21 16:18:50 1985
Date-Received: Thu, 24-Jan-85 19:35:13 EST
References: ,
Organization: Contel Cado, Torrance, CA
Lines: 42

I neglected to mention, the Atari has a '4-color' character mode. In
this mode, 40x24 character cells of 4x8 4-color characters are presented.
With the proper construction of 'mosaic' characters, multi-screen backgrounds
can be constructed which take up no more than 960 bytes each. Scrolling
can be performed as usual in this mode, and with the use of display list
and/or vertical interrupts, character sets can be switched to facilitate
a more extended 'mosaic' set to work with, or to facilitate character
set based animation.

The game 'Spelunker' is one of my more favorite examples of character
set animation and is mixed with scrolling and player-missile graphics.
The game background is peppered with little animations, Power packs
undulate, little puffs of smoke pop up in various places, extra-life
prizes rotate, sections of the terrain bounce up and down, vertical 'lifts'
scroll up and down. With this type of animation, the use of these little
movements are not any more costly if you have a screenful of them than if
you only have one thing going on. I get the impression that a high
percentage of the better Atari games use this mode. The list includes
games such as Ali Baba and Return of Heracles, Miner 2049er, Shamus I & II,
Zeppelin, Necromancer, Montezuma's Revenge, Seven Cities of Gold, Murder
on the Zinderneuf, Gateway to Apshai, Lode Runner, Pharoah's Curse.
I'm guessing on these, by the way, I don't know what they're actually
using, but they LOOK like they are probably using the 4-color character
mode, in addition to other effects.

Can the Commodore perform 'like' functions? I would expect it can, as
I think some of the above-mentioned games are available for it. Is the
resolution the same?

On the subject of sound, what capabilities does the Commodore
have for generating different wave-shapes? The Atari is limited
to 1 pure tone, and 7 noise tones. No sawtooth, squarewave, or
programmable wave shapes. Some filtering, but rudimentary I think (
haven't fully explored this). However, I am continually amazed by what
some people have been able to do with what little there is.

Keith Doyle
{ucbvax,ihnp4,decvax}!trwrb!cadovax!keithd
"You'll PAY to know what you REALLY think!"

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by keithd on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:16 GMT
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Message-ID:
Date: Mon, 21-Jan-85 21:58:20 EST
Article-I.D.: cadovax.364
Posted: Mon Jan 21 21:58:20 1985
Date-Received: Thu, 24-Jan-85 19:35:29 EST
References: ,
Organization: Contel Cado, Torrance, CA
Lines: 41

[]
[color=blue]> Commodore use their own video controller.[/color]
[color=blue]> Interrupts are a major feature in the video (raster,collision etc.)[/color]

not always necessary in the Atari except for basic vertical interrupt,
however other interrupts are available, and can be quite useful.

[color=blue]> There is collision checking,(background and foreground plus a possible[/color]
[color=blue]> foreground colour that is transparent for collisions).[/color]

Ditto Atari

[color=blue]> The sound chip (SID) has a (maybe more) 4 bit D to A output also.[/color]

Ditto Atari, however, display interrupts (including the vertical
required for basic display) will affect associated timing loops
when using this feature.

[color=blue]> It also has an input that gets filtered if you desire (i.e. tape).[/color]

Not sure about that on the Atari.

[color=blue]> I have had 48 24*21 sprites on the screen at the same time.[/color]

You could have 120 8*8 sprites, or 24 20*8, or 96 10*8 or....etc.
(odd sizes are possible) but not without some restrictions. I
would imagine the C64 would have some restrictions at these resolutions.

[color=blue]> The c64 has three Forth compilers available at my last count, plus[/color]
[color=blue]> one full Pascal implementation.[/color]

The Atari has AT LEAST 3 Forth compilers available, several of them
are public domain, At least 1 Pascal and at least 2 C's. Several
Macro Assemblers, Logo, Pilot, A Basic compiler, Lisp, etc. etc. etc...

[color=blue]>   Dave.[/color]

Keith Doyle
{ucbvax,ihnp4,decvax}!trwrb!cadovax!keithd

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by keithd on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:16 GMT

Message-ID:
Date: Mon, 21-Jan-85 22:27:42 EST
Article-I.D.: cadovax.365
Posted: Mon Jan 21 22:27:42 1985
Date-Received: Thu, 24-Jan-85 19:35:45 EST
References: ,
Organization: Contel Cado, Torrance, CA
Lines: 135

[]
[color=blue]> I've been reading all these comparisons and I own a c64.[/color]
[color=blue]> I think that straight comparison is out, there are too many[/color]
[color=blue]> basic differances.[/color]

Who cares? I'm learning a lot about the other guy.

[color=blue]> For a start the Atari machines have a display processor of sorts,[/color]
[color=blue]> that make the video very powerful, but the c64 has a versatile[/color]
[color=blue]> video controller that can tell the processor when to do things,[/color]
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[color=blue]> This uses a lot of main processor time if used in many screen locations[/color]
[color=blue]> but can be used to give many effects not available using the display [/color]
[color=blue]> file on an Atari,for example a one line pixel scrolling message anywhere[/color]
[color=blue]> on the screen.[/color]

This is performed in almost exactly the same manner on the Atari. The
display list is a table of instructions for the display controller that
indicate what graphics (or text) mode is being displayed, and where the
data is coming from in memory. Each mode takes up some number of raster
lines, and at the end of that mode, a new display instruction is fetched
to determine what the next mode is. For example, the first display list
instruction can indicate a 2 color charater mode, starting from some
memory address. This mode would take up 8 raster lines. The next display
list instruction could specify a graphics mode that takes up a single
raster line. then another character mode, or several line graphics mode
line could be implemented. Scrolling can take place merely by modifying
the display-list table's address pointer to the data for the specific line.
A display list instruction has a bit to signify an interrupt on a given
mode line. The processor can then modify the color tables, move the pointer
to the character set data, move a players (sprites) horizontal location,
or some combinations thereof, and probably a few useful things I haven't
thought of. Interrupts are not required for scrolling, but the main
vertical interrupt is required as it sets up the initial pointer to the
display list table itself. Multiple display list tables can be kept
in memory, so vertical interrupt routines can alternate or 'page-flip'

or whatever very simply.

[color=blue]> The disk interface speed in now effectively cured, with small[/color]
[color=blue]> alternative loaders. It now takes about 20sec to load 32k instead of[/color]
[color=blue]> 1min30sec that it takes normally, since Atari use serial interfacing[/color]
[color=blue]> as well, I would assume that their disk speed is slower than this.[/color]

I wouldn't assume this, but I haven't timed it.

[color=blue]> As for memory, I can't compare the XL machines with the c64 since[/color]
[color=blue]> I'm not sure of the facts, but almost all commercial software is capable[/color]
[color=blue]> of access to the entire 64k of memory.[/color]

With the Atari, access to the entire 64k is available, but many applications
may not use it as it may eliminate a large part of their market which may
be in the 48k 800's out there.

[color=blue]> Sound, the Atari relies on fixed oscillators with which one can only[/color]
[color=blue]> make beeping noises (directly), the c64 has a synth which does more[/color]
[color=blue]> than most other people mentioned. For a start you have a choice of wave-[/color]
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[color=blue]> ratio. Finally there is the white noise generator, this is just another[/color]
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[color=blue]> high,low and band pass filters which can be used to make tinny[/color]
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[color=blue]> ring modulation, hard sync., envelope shaping, A to D converter[/color]
[color=blue]> on voice 3, plus much more. I have heard very good speach synthesis[/color]
[color=blue]> on the c64 with no extra hard-ware(it really sounds like a person.)[/color]

In general, the C64 sounds like it has better sound generation characteristics,
however there is a very good software-only speech synthesizer that sounds
quite good that runs on the Atari.

[color=blue]> Graphics are next, the Atari highest mode is higher than that of[/color]
[color=blue]> the c64 I think, but what makes graphics in games is colour.[/color]
[color=blue]> The Atari is lousy at having a good range of colour on the screen[/color]
[color=blue]> at once, with careful planning on a c64 there is no reason[/color]
[color=blue]> why you can't use all 16 colours where you want when you want them,[/color]
[color=blue]> i.e. no trouble getting more than 2 colours on one raster line.[/color]

WRONG, you can get all 128 Atari colors on the screen at the same time.
There are modes that allow 16 colors, or 16 shades of 1 color, and with
display list interrupts, the entire color table can be modified at each
display mode line. Color range is NOT a problem with the atari.

[color=blue]> The Atari sprites appear to be very limited too, why would one[/color]
[color=blue]> want a sprite filling the whole screen? Admittedly there are only[/color]
[color=blue]> 8 sprites on the c64, but with the raster interrupts running[/color]
[color=blue]> then any number can be used, and they CAN move in both directions.[/color]

Rarely is a single 'sprite' used filling the whole screen. Using display-list
interrupts, a single 'sprite' vertical stripe, can be divided up into many
individual ones. (up to 192) with different horizontal positions. Granted
vertical movement takes a byte move of the sprite data, but many times this
is not a lot of data, and can be done quickly. With 4 vertical 'players'
(Atari's name for sprites) and 4 vertical 'missiles' (Atari's name for
2 bit wide sprites, can be combined to make a 5'th 8 bit wide player) this
adds up to a fair amount of graphics power.

[color=blue]> Software, this is where my favorite machine starts looking a[/color]
[color=blue]> little low, unfortunately where there are the same games on both[/color]
[color=blue]> the Atari and the c64 the c64 looks worse off, I can see no real[/color]
[color=blue]> reason why this is so, but I can only guess by saying that all of it[/color]
[color=blue]> was originally written on the Atari and then made to work on the c64.[/color]
[color=blue]> Thus when it designed all the graphics etc. were made to fit the Atari[/color]
[color=blue]> in particular and it was hard to move. Where software was made for[/color]
[color=blue]> the c64 (see Impossible Mission or Space Taxi) the quality is the[/color]
[color=blue]> best.[/color]

[color=blue]> In the case of support all I can say is that in England, where I live,[/color]
[color=blue]> Atari seems to have vanished, and there appears to be no support whatever[/color]
[color=blue]> despite all the Net News saying the 800XL is only about $120 over in[/color]
[color=blue]> America.[/color]

I must admit, even here in the U.S. (L.A. to be exact) support for Ataris
has kind of dried up. You used to be able to see Atari's for sale in the
computer stores, with all the associated support. However, this was back
when the 800's were selling for $600+. Now the main source for Ataris is
toy stores and discount houses. Up to date software supply is growing thin,
as the computer stores prefer the larger profit margin of IBM and Apple
wares. This may be a phenomenon we all have to live with, and perhaps resort
to mail order if all else fails. One hope, at least to Atari, would be the
success of their new 68000 product, which may re-inspire some stores to
carry the complete Atari line. I hope so. And/or perhaps the Amiga will
have a similar effect for C64 owners.

[color=blue]> Dave (Maths @ Warwick University, UK)[/color]

Keith Doyle
{ucbvax,ihnp4,decvax}!trwrb!cadovax!keithd

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by kek on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:17 GMT

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Message-ID:
Date: Thu, 24-Jan-85 08:45:40 EST
Article-I.D.: mgweed.15073
Posted: Thu Jan 24 08:45:40 1985
Date-Received: Fri, 25-Jan-85 07:53:52 EST
References: ,
Organization: AT&T Consumer Products - Montgomery Illinois
Lines: 23

Keith says that we may have to resort to mail order software as if it was
a last resort. Actually, I prefer to deal with mail order houses because
they seem to CARE about Atari and Atari owners. I agree that it is (or
could be) a pain to have to send software back if it doesn't work but I
have only had to do that once. 'Spy vs Spy' didn't load when I first
got it but I had send in the warranty card already, so I sent it back to
FirstStar directly with a detailed letter. It was packed carefully and
marked magnetic, do not X-ray, etc. When I got back my new copy, it was
in a large envelope with no warning and no letter of any kind. To be fair,
the package it is sold in is very sturdy and protects the disk very good.

I deal mostly with Software Unlimited (Disk of the Month Club) and
Software Discounters of America. Both are excellent and I usually have
the software in a week to 10 days from mailing my order. I say 'give the
business to the person that wants it the most'. The prices are usually
a lot better than I see locally and the shipping vs local tax is pretty
close to a trade-off.

   Kit Kimes
   AT&T Consumer Products
   Montgomery Works
   Montgomery, Il. 60538-0305
   ..!ihnp4!mgweed!kek

Subject: Re: Atari 800XL superior to c64?
Posted by keithd on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 01:26:24 GMT

Message-ID:
Date: Mon, 28-Jan-85 14:37:53 EST
Article-I.D.: cadovax.383
Posted: Mon Jan 28 14:37:53 1985
Date-Received: Sat, 2-Feb-85 14:37:01 EST
References: , ,
Organization: Contel Cado, Torrance, CA
Lines: 48

[........]
[color=blue]>   .....'Spy vs Spy' didn't load when I first[/color]
[color=blue]> got it ....[/color]

[color=blue]>   Kit Kimes[/color]

By the way, what did you think of 'Spy vs Spy', I've been thinking about
getting it (I was a MAD fan in the 60's).

My main problem with mail order (and Toys R Us for that matter) is that
I'd like to know a little more about the game before I buy. Used to be
able to demo software at the computer stores and at G.A.M.E.S. before they
went bankrupt. Maybe I just got spoiled, being able to get demos first.

On the subject of other games, has anyone seen any of the 'Alternate
Reality' series yet? A recent Antic (or was it Analog?) had a very
interesting review of the first one, but they only had a pre-release
demo. I've also been hearing about the series (I forget what it's called)
that is already out for Apple and C64, the one that has several adventures
based on various novels (I saw Farenheit 451 for the Apple at FEDCO).

Actually, this newsgroup is probably a good forum for discussing good games
and utilities etc. Here are some of my favorites:

Spelunker   'climbing' game, related to Miner 2049er but a lot better.
Gruds in Space   Good graphic adventure, pay no attention to the dumb name
Necromancer   Totally unique, 100% of your Atari's features are going
    ALL the time. Wacky and hectic.
Montezuma's Revenge A cross between 'Shamus' and Miner 2049er, sort of.
    multi-screen obstacle course.
Gateway to Apshai MUCH better than the original Basic 'Temple of Apshai'
    Graphic D&D type. Closest thing to ROGUE on any non-unix
    I've ever seen.
Return of Heracles Great sequel to Ali-Baba, a multi-player D&D type, you
    can add players at any time during the game, best example
    of what a 'user-friendly' interface is, great with several

people, you're all against the computer and it inspires
a lot of cameraderie.
Realm of Impossibility
This used to be 'Zombies', is ONLY good with 2 people.
One player play is boring, but 2 is wacky fun.
Zeppelin   Latest by the author of Shamus, lots going on, good graphics.

Keith Doyle
{ucbvax,ihnp4,decvax}!trwrb!cadovax!keithd
"You'll PAY to know what you REALLY think!"