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Apple II Video Overlay Card: Tips (11/96)

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TOPIC -----

Here are some helpful tips and hints for using the Apple II Video Overlay card.

DISCUSSION -----

As you plan your video presentation, think about how the overlay will enhance your presentation. Do you want to include:

- Opening title and closing credits?
- Highlight information presented in the video?
- Dazzle the audience with special effects?

Planning For Computer Graphics

Try to determine where the computer graphics would be useful only where appropriate. You may find yourself overusing computer graphics. Consider whether you should highlight your video with computer graphics, narration, or a combination. Your overlays will be more effective if you use them judiciously.

Decide on a workable design for your graphics, and use it consistently throughout your presentation. For example, always use the same font for the text, the same colors for the graphic elements, such as line and boxes, and the same kind of special effects. Consistent use of computer graphics will make your presentation seem more unified and easier to follow.

Use high-quality video equipment and software that allows high resolution graphics. Clean the heads on your VCR if you haven't cleaned them lately. The better the video equipment and computer images, the better your overlays will look.

When shooting a video for an overlay, try to anticipate where your graphics will fit into the shot and leave enough space for them. For example, if you plan to superimpose someone's name below a close-up of their face, leave enough room in the lower third of the screen. Treat the graphics as an integral part of the composition, not as an afterthought.

Designing For The Screen

Keep it simple, don't try to cram too much into a single overlay. If your video has lots of motion, use simple graphics. If your graphics are complex, consider using a still scene for the video portion.

Limit the information in each overlay to one or two points. Presenting too many facts in one overlay will not help the viewers remember them. Television viewers may not be able to flip back to review something they missed.

Use readable fonts for text. Bold, simple fonts seem crisp and are easily read on the screen. The color of your text should contrast with the video colors. If you plan to record the overlay, make the text at least 16 point.

Special Considerations for Composite Video

Avoid using computer graphics that are extremely bright. If the colors in your graphics are too intense, especially if they are hot colors such as bright red, the graphics may appear to vibrate along the edges. You can correct the problem by using a less intense color, like off-white instead of white. You can also reduce the intensity of a color by allowing some of the video image to blend in, using VideoMix.

If you are recording your overlays, view them on a composite monitor or a television.

Colors displayed on an RGB monitor are more stable than colors displayed on a composite monitor as they are less likely to shimmer or bleed into another color. If you are recording your overlays on tape, a composite monitor or a television will show you a better representation of the overlay's appearance during playback. By viewing your overlays this way, without an RGB monitor, you will be better able to see, and correct, problems before they are recorded on the videotape.

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