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Macintosh and CD-I Development (11/94)

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TOPIC ----------

I am interested in using the Macintosh to develop CD-I (compact disc interactive) applications. What can and cannot be done in this field?

- Is there a CD-I compatible player for the Macintosh?

- How would one develop an animation on the Macintosh and then transfer it to CD-I?

- Can sounds be created and manipulated on the Macintosh and then used on the CD-I?

DISCUSSION ----------

Currently, Macintosh is being used as a front-end device for assembling certain elements of CD-I. This is about the extent of what can be done with the Macintosh. Since the CD-I system is an alternative computer system to the Macintosh, we cannot duplicate a CD-I system exactly without accommodating the OS9 operating system.

The video portion of CD-I is compressed from analog video sources. Thus, preparing Macintosh animations for this format is the same as preparing animations for videotape. Using a program like MacroMind Director and an NTSC output video NuBus card, and recording the output onto videotape, would be the simplest way to provide video.

The quality of the compressed video coming from the CD-I compression methods is low compared to VHS tape. Generally, the playback of the video is around 12 frames per second for one quarter screen. The proposal provides for only 30,000 colors in the video image--far short of the Macintosh 24-bit capability.

Because CD-I uses digital audio, digital audio products from companies like

Digidesign and New England Digital can be used for mastering the audio portion of the CD-I system. However, this master audio would then need to be sent through the CD-I compression method.

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