

MagicTV2 Demo AmigaGuide

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Chapter 1

MagicTV2 Demo AmigaGuide

1.1 MagicTV2 Beta Demo

MagicTV2 Beta Demo
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1.2 About MagicTV2

1.1 About MagicTV2

MagicTV is the most effective software flicker-fixer available for AGA Amigas. It's true. If you don't believe me, try it!

This demo can now completely replace the old MagicTV.

This is a 'beta' prerelease-demo of MagicTV2. It is a complete rewrite of the original MagicTV, and is now stable.

Other improvements over the original MagicTV are as follows:

- * Palette changes are quick and clean - the screen is no longer messed up during DisplayBeeps etc.
- * The full 24-bit palette is used by patched screens, whereas the old MagicTV could only handle 12-bit colour.
- * Patched screens no longer start flickering when moved or rearranged.
- * CPU usage is now zero except during palette changes.
- * 16-colour screens are patched properly (no prefs program)

However, the following features of the original MagicTV have been lost:

- * MagicTV2 does not yet run as a commodity.

1.3 Motivation

1.2 Motivation

These days, the prerequisite for a good-looking Workbench is a high-resolution, proportional screenmode. MagicWB, MUI, NewIcons, etc. all require this.

However, for those of us using a TV or a single-scan monitor, this means a Hires-Interlaced screenmode. Which means flickering.

About two years ago, messing around in PPaint, I found a way to reduce flickering with very little loss of detail and contrast. A couple of days later I had a working hack to recreate that effect on Workbench.

More recently, I was looking through Aminet and noticed a couple of things. Firstly, there were many sets of icons, fonts and backdrops designed for non-proportional screenmodes. Secondly, there were several tools for reducing interlace flicker - they all relied on darkening the bright colours, which, frankly, doesn't help all that much.

So I figured there were plenty of people out there who, like me, were stuck using non-proportional screenmodes or flickering interlace. I cleaned up my

hack, made it a commodity, and released it to an unsuspecting public.

Within a few days, I'd had hundreds of responses via e-mail. Half the users though it was wonderful. The other half thought it would be a whole lot better if it didn't crash so much...

Four releases of MagicTV later, the situation was no better. It still works fine on my Amiga, but that's no excuse. Anyway, I'd had some ideas for a better way to implement it.

Thus, MagicTV2 was born. And here it is. Almost. But it really is stable this time...

1.4 Features/Limitations

1.3 Features/Limitations

This is (you may have noticed) a 'Beta-Demo' release. That basically means MagicTV2 is at a pretty early stage in its development, but it works well enough to release it.

What you need to know is this:

- * The pointer colours get messed up. That's because the palette entries used by the pointer get used by the blurring effect.
- * Every interlaced viewport (with sufficiently few colours) is patched. There's no way to select which ones get patched and which don't.

1.5 System Requirements

2.1 System Requirements

MagicTV2 requires AmigaOS 3.0 or greater, and the AGA chipset.

I may release a version which runs on 4-colour screens under ECS.

1.6 Installing MagicTV2

2.2 Installing MagicTV2

Included are two versions of MagicTV2 - one which patches 16-colour screens, and one which does not. This is because, at the moment, palette changes on 16-colour MagicTV screens can be pretty slow on an unexpanded A1200.

To install, simply drag the version you require to your WBStartup drawer.

This Beta-Demo release does not check whether it is already running - DO NOT RUN IT TWICE!

IMPORTANT!

MagicTV2 is very incompatible with the original MagicTV. Ensure no older version is running before starting MagicTV2.

1.7 Planned Features

3.1 Planned Features

MagicTV2 is far from complete. The following features are planned:

- * "Magic" screenmodes selectable via standard screenmode requesters. I'm having a lot of difficulty finding all the information I need in order to do this. If anyone can help, I'd be most grsteful.
- * A fix or workaround for the pointer-palette problem.
- * Commodity interface.

1.8 About BlackArts

4.1 About BlackArts

Right now, BlackArts is merely a concept, with the following aims:

- * Promote the Amiga by improving the often-overlooked "bottom-end" machines. Most users of other platforms view the Amiga as having a low-resolution grey screen with ugly black-and-white icons. We know this isn't the case, but there are enough Amigas out there which look just like this for that image to persist.
- * Provide much-needed support for shareware/freeware programmers. Whilst developing MagicTV, I found it quite impossible to find any information without spending hours wandering through the Amiga Web Network etc. I want to create a centralised network of Amiga programmers willing to help others in their work.
- * Publish shareware and freeware in a standardised, professional manner. Documenting, packaging, putting together a website, and getting others to take notice of a piece of shareware is hard work. I want to put together the resources to make this easier, and offer services to help shareware authors.

If you want to become a part of BlackArts, e-mail me at:
e1999@angelfire.com

Also, if you agree with the first of the above aims, you should check out:
www.angelfire.com/nc/e1999

1.9 Contacts

4.2 Contacts

You may contact me, Neil Crawforth, directly at:
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If you have any queries, suggestions or bug-reports regarding MagicTV2, or if you want information on the development of MagicTV2, contact:

magictv@angelfire.com

or go to:

www.angelfire.com/nc/MagicTV

If you have any queries or suggestions regarding BlackArts, contact:

e1999@angelfire.com

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