Embedded graphics on STM32F4

V0.1
OBJECTIVES

- Getting familiar with basics of graphics
  - General LCD connection
  - Color representation
  - Layers
  - Transparency / alpha channels
  - CLUT
  - Color keying

- Understand how you can benefit from STM32F4’s HW acceleration
  - Usage of LTDC layer features
  - Offload CPU by using Chrom-ART
  - Hardware pixel format conversion
- Fully compatible with F4x
- Up to 180MHz with over-drive mode
- Dual Bank 2 x 1MB Flash
- 256KB SRAM
- FMC with SDRAM + Support and 32-bit data
- Audio PLL + Serial Audio I/F
- LCD-TFT Controller
- Chrom – ART Accelerator
- Hash: supporting SHA-2 and GCM
- More serial com and more fast timers running at Fcpu
- 100 pins to 208 pins
- 1.71V-3.6V Supply

New IPs/Features/more IPs instances

STM32F4x9 Block Diagram
System Architecture

- **CCM data RAM**: 64KB
- **Dual Port DMA1**: Master 2, Dual Port DMA2: Master 3
- **Ethernet 10/100**: Master 4
- **High Speed USB2.0**: Master 5
- **LCD-TFT**: Master 6
- **DMA2D**: Master 7
- **CORTEX-M4**: 180MHz, FPU & MPU
- **Dual Port DMA1**: Master 2
- **Dual Port DMA2**: Master 3
- **Ethernet 10/100**: Master 4
- **High Speed USB2.0**: Master 5
- **LCD-TFT**: Master 6
- **DMA2D**: Master 7
- **CCM data RAM**: 64KB
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- **DMA2D**: Master 7
- **CCM data RAM**: 64KB

**Multi-AHB Bus Matrix**

- **AHB1**: Dual Port AHB1-APB2
- **AHB2**: Dual Port AHB1-APB1
- **SRAM1**: 112KB
- **SRAM2**: 16KB
- **SRAM3**: 64KB
- **FMC**: Dual Port AHB1-APB2
- **2Mbytes Flash**: Bank1 1Mbytes, Bank2 1Mbytes
• **Past / Today**
  - Keyboard and/or Knob
  - Optional 7-segment display
  - Optional dot-matrix display (text or graphical)
  - Limited interactivity

• **Next generation**
  - One TFT color display + touch sensing (virtual keyboard/knob)
  - **More interactivity**
    - Integrated manual
    - Flash like animations for “how to”
    - Explicit diagnostic
    - …etc…
Display needs

- For home appliance
  - Display size and form factor will be very different from an equipment to another
  - In most of them we shall not be above 6~7 inches
  - iPad 2 display is 132PPI (pixels per inch) and can go up to 160 or even more (retina display)
  - 7” 16:9 display represents 800x480 ~384kpix @130PPI (1024x576 @160PPI)
Image quality needs

- iPhone has completely changed the required level of graphical quality
  - Bigger display size
  - Better display resolution
  - Perfect icons
  - State of the art animations (coverflow…etc…)

- User wants the same experience than on iPhone
  - Huge resource needs on microcontroller side
  - Hardware acceleration becomes mandatory
  - Content design/creation is a key aspect

- But no need for a gaming machine
  - No need for real 3D: 2D graphics is wide enough
Step 1: Create the content in a frame buffer

- The frame buffer is built by composing graphical primitives.
- This operation is done by the CPU running a graphical library software.
- It can be accelerated by a dedicated hardware used with the CPU through the graphical library.
- More often the frame buffer can be updated, more fluent will be the animations (frames per second / fps).

Step 2: Display the frame buffer

- The frame buffer is transferred to the display through a dedicated hardware interface.
- Graphical oriented microcontrollers are offering a TFT controller to drive directly the display.
- The frame buffer must be sent at 60fps to have a perfect image color and stability (independently from the animation fps).
STM32F4x9 Architecture

- **TFT controller** allows the interfacing
- **Chrome-ART (DMA2D)** provides a **true HW graphical acceleration**
- **DMA2D offloads the CPU** for operations like rectangle filling, rectangle copy (with or without pixel format conversion), and image blending
- **DMA2D goes faster than the CPU** for the equivalent operation
Implementation examples and resources requirements
Single Chip MCU

- Internal Flash up to 2MB
- Internal SRAM up to 256KB
  - Frame buffer in internal SRAM
    - 16-bit QVGA (320 x 240 ~154 KB)
    - 8-bit WQVGA (400 x 240 ~97 KB)
- Package **LQFP 100pin**

Cost saving + Graphic Acceleration

STM32F4x9
MCU with External Memory

- Internal Flash up to 2MB
- Internal SRAM up to 256KB
- External Memory for frame buffer
  - 16-bit or 32-bit SDRAM / SRAM
- Package: LQFP 144pin, up to 208.

Unique Graphical Capability and Flexible architecture

STM32F4x9
Which package to use depending on the variant targeted?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>TFT Controller</th>
<th>External Memory - SDRAM</th>
<th>STM32F4x9 package</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-End</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32-bit</td>
<td>LQFP208/BGA216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-End</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16-bit</td>
<td>LQFP144/ BGA176 / LQFP176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-End</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LQFP100/LQFP144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-End</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LQFP100/LQFP144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SDRAM devices example:
- [MT48LC4M16A2P-7E](#) : 64Mb
- [MT48LC16M16A2P-7E](#) : 256Mb
F4 discovery demo application

• Open the demo project in IAR EWARM.

…\Projects\Demonstration\EWARM_Demo\STM32F429I-Discovery_Demo.eww

• Build the project (F7) and debug (Ctrl-D) – this may take around one minute and run (F5).

• Every push of USER button will switch to next demonstration.

The Discovery kit is present for you, you can keep it after the seminar.
In Case of Troubles with ST-Link

- Install ST-Link utility (it contains STLink driver)
  `STM32F4_GraphicWorkshop\PC_SW\STM32 ST-LINK Utility_v3.1.0.exe`

- Plug-in ST-Link (or Discovery board using mini USB connector)

- Open Device Manager and check that STLink is properly installed

- In case not, right-click on the STLink and select “Update Driver Software …” and then follow instructions.
F4 discovery demo application

• You can follow the application on the discovery kit

• By pushing the USER button you can navigate to the next step of example application

• Move forward by pushing the USER button

• Embedded STLINK debugger
LCD-TFT Display Controller (LTDC)

MCD Application Team
Benefits

• AHB bus Master
  • Can access any part of address space → ext. memory, internal SRAM, Flash.

• Flexible programmable display parameters
  • Display control signals
  • Flexible color format

• Multi-Layer Support
  • Windowing
  • Blending
  • Flexible programmable parameters for each Layer

• On chip memory or External memory can be used as Frame buffer
LCD-TFT architecture

AHB Master Interface
- Layer1 FIFO 64x32b
- Layer2 FIFO 64x32b
- PFC

Blending
Dithering

Configuration and status registers
Synchronous Timings Generation

AHB Interface
APB Interface

LCD Panel
- LCD_CLK
- LCD_HSYNC
- LCD_VSYNC
- LCD_DE
- LCD_R[7:0]
- LCD_G[7:0]
- LCD_B[7:0]
LTDC Timings

VBP: Vertical Back porch
VFP: Vertical Front porch
HBP: Horizontal Back porch
HFP: Horizontal Front porch

These timings come from the datasheet of the display. E.g. TFT on discovery kit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Typ.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horizontal Synchronization</td>
<td>Hsync</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>DOTCLK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horizontal Back Porch</td>
<td>HBP</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>DOTCLK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horizontal Address</td>
<td>HAadr</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DOTCLK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horizontal Front Porch</td>
<td>HFP</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>DOTCLK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical Synchronization</td>
<td>Vsync</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical Back Porch</td>
<td>VBP</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical Address</td>
<td>VAddr</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertical Front Porch</td>
<td>VFP</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frame Display

1 Frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VSYNC</th>
<th>Vertical Back Porch (VBP)</th>
<th>LCD Lines</th>
<th>Vertical Front Porch (VFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1 Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HSYNC</th>
<th>Horizontal (VBP)</th>
<th>LCD Columns</th>
<th>Horizontal (HFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

LCD_CLK

1 2 3 4 5 x x x x x x 480

LCD RGBs

LCD Data Enable
Vertical/Horizontal transactions

- Vertical transaction
  - Start of Frame

- Horizontal transaction
  - Start of Scan Line
LCD basic timing signals

• LCDs require the following basic timing signals:
  • VSYNC (Vertical Sync for TFT)
    • Used to reset the LCD row pointer to the top of the display
  • HSYNC (Horizontal sync for TFT)
    • Used to reset the LCD column pointer to the edge of the display
  • D0..Dxx (1 or more data lines)
    • Data line
  • LCDCLK (LCD pixel clock)
    • Used to control panel refresh rate

• Some panels may require additional timing signals:
  • LCD_DE
    • LCD data Enable. Used to indicate valid data on the LCD data bus
  • Other signals – some optional
    • LCD power, backlight power, touchscreen
LCD Memory Requirements

- **Frame buffer size**
  - The panel size and bits per pixel determine the amount of memory needed to hold the graphic buffer.
  - Memory Requirement (KB) = (bpp * Width * Height)/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel Resolution</th>
<th>Total Pixel</th>
<th>bpp (bit per pixel)</th>
<th>Required memory (KB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>320x240 (QVGA)</td>
<td>76.8K</td>
<td>16bpp</td>
<td>153.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8bpp</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480x272 (WQVGA)</td>
<td>130.5K</td>
<td>16bpp</td>
<td>261.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>640x480 (VGA)</td>
<td>307.2K</td>
<td>16bpp</td>
<td>614.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In many cases, more memory is needed. E.g. double buffering: one graphic buffer to store the current image while a second buffer used to prepare the next image.
LTDC Clocks and reset

• Three clock domains:
  • AHB clock domain (HCLK)
    • To transfer data from the memories to the Layer FIFO and vise versa
  • APB2 clock domain (PCLK2)
    • To access the configuration and status registers
  • The Pixel Clock domain (LCD_CLK)
    • To generate LCD-TFT interface signals.
    • LCD_CLK output should be configured following the panel requirements. The LCD_CLK is configured through the PLLSAI

• LTDC Reset
  • It is reset by setting the LTDCRST bit in the RCC_APB2RSTR register
The LCD-TFT IO pins not used by the application can be used for other purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCD-TFT Signals</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LCD_CLK</td>
<td>Pixel Clock output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_HSYNC</td>
<td>Horizontal Synchronization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_VSYNC</td>
<td>Vertical Synchronization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_DE</td>
<td>Data Enable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_R[7:0]</td>
<td>8-Bits Red data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_G[7:0]</td>
<td>8-Bits Green data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD_B[7:0]</td>
<td>8-Bits Blue data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LTDC Main Features - (1/3)

- 24-bit RGB Parallel Pixel Output; 8 bits-per-pixel (RGB888)
- AHB 32-Bit master with burst access of 16 words to any system memory
  - Dedicated FIFO per Layer (depth of 64 word)
- Programmable timings to adapt to targeted display panel.
  - HSYNC width, VSYNC width, VBP, HBP, VFP, HFP
- Programmable Polarity of:
  - HSYNC, VSYNC, Data Enable
  - Pixel clock
- Supports only TFT (no STN)
LTDC Main Features - (2/3)

• Programmable display Size
  • Supports up to 800 x 600 (SVGA)

• Programmable Background color
  • 24-bit RGB, used for blending with bottom layer.

• Multi-Layer Support with blending, 2 layers + solid color background

• Dithering (2-bits per color channel (2,2,2 for RGB))
  • Combination of adjacent pixels to simulate the desired shade
  • Dithering is applicable for 18bit color displays, to simulate 24bit colors.

• Newly programmed values can be loaded immediately at run time or during Vertical blanking

• 2 Interrupts generated on 4 event Flags
Alpha Channel Usage

• The Alpha channel represent the transparency of a pixel

• It’s **mandatory** as soon as you are manipulating bitmaps with non square edges or for anti-aliased font support

![Aliased](image1.png)  ![Anti-aliased](image2.png)

- **0xFF = opaque**
- **0x00 = transparent**

Box filled with color in ARGB8888 format

0xFFF0000  0xAAFF0000  0x30FF0000
### Pixel Data Mapping vs Color Format

#### 8 programmable Input color format per layer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Ax[7:0]</th>
<th>Rx[7:0]</th>
<th>Gx[7:0]</th>
<th>Bx[7:0]</th>
<th>bpp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARBG8888</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGB888</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGB565</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGB1555</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGB4444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Ax: Alpha Channel
- Rx: Red Channel
- Gx: Green Channel
- Bx: Blue Channel
- Lx: Monochrome Channel
- 8bpp: 8-bit per pixel
- 16bpp: 16-bit per pixel
- 32bpp: 32-bit per pixel

**Note:**
- ARGB8888, RGB888, RGB565, ARGB1555, ARGB4444, L8, AL88, AL44 allow for programmable input color format per layer.
Pixel Format Conversion

• The color format of a bitmap converted into another one: this operation is called Pixel Format Conversion (PFC)

• Direct Mode to Direct Mode or Indirect Mode to Direct Mode is easy to do, but converting to an indirect color format would mean regenerating a CLUT which is a very complex operation...

![Diagram of Pixel Format Conversion](image.png)
PFC - Direct color Mode

32-bit per pixel
ARGB8888

24-bit per pixel
RGB888

16-bit per pixel
ARGB4444
ARGB1555
RGB565

Direct coding
PFC - Indirect color Mode

16-bit per pixel
AL88

8-bit per pixel
L8
AL44
A8

4-bit per pixel
L4
A4

Color LookUp Table

Indirect coding
CLUT - Palletized color

- Color Look-Up Table (CLUT) up to 256 entry per layer

- The frame buffer will contain an index value for each pixel

- The CLUT must be pre-loaded with RGB values for each index
  - Each RGB value is stored in a position in the CLUT.
  - The CLUT must be reloaded only when LTDC is disabled or during vertical blanking period

- The CLUT can be enabled on the fly for every layer through the LTDC_LxCR register
• The R, G and B values and their own respective address are programmed through the `LTDC_LxCLUTWR` register.

  • L8 and AL88 input pixel format, the CLUT has to be loaded by 256 colors
  • AL44 input pixel format, the CLUT has to be loaded by 16 colors. The address of each color must be filled by replicating the 4-bit L channel to 8-bit.
    • L0 (indexed color 0), at address 0x00,
    • L1, at address 0x11…
    • L2, at address 0x22

Indexed 16 – L4  Indexed 256 - L8  RGB888

Source - wikipedia.org
• Size of pictures displayed
  • RGB 888 - 230kb – needed for pictures with uniform color transitions (like blue sky on the picture)
  • RGB565 - 154kb – good trade off between size and quality
  • L8 - 78kb – for small icons it is usually good enough, without significant quality decrease

• Picture quality
  • Difference is mostly visible in the color transitions (like the blue sky)
  • Dithering is improving the quality, but it make worse details recognition

• STM32F429I-Discovery kit display
  • 18bit interface, it is not possible to display 24bpp (RGB888)
  • Difference between direct RGB888 and RGB565 is not visible
  • HW dithering is improving the quality of RGB888
  • Indexed L8 format can be improved by dithering implemented on PC side
Layer Programmable Parameters: Window

- **Window position and size**
  - The first and last visible Pixel are configured in the \texttt{LTDC\_LxWHPCR} register.
  - The first and last visible line are configured in the \texttt{LTDC\_LxWVPCR}
Layer Programmable Parameters: Color Frame Buffer

- The frame buffer size, line length and the number of lines settings must be correctly configured:
  - If it is set to less bytes than required by the layer, FIFO underrun error will be set.
  - If it is set to more bytes than actually required by the layer, the useless data read is discarded. The useless data is not displayed.
Layer Programmable Parameters:
Color Frame Buffer - effects

- Simply changing the start of the layer frame buffer you can scroll the picture over the layer
  - The picture stored in the memory must be bigger than actual layer size
Demo - Moving layer

```c
LTDC_Layer_InitStruct.LTDC_CFBStartAdress = (uint32_t)Image + 3 * (offsetH + (offsetV * Image_width));
```

- Bytes per pixel
- Horizontal scroll
- Vertical scroll
- Base address of image in memory
- Just by changing the layer buffer address you can move the visible layer over a bitmap which is bigger than the layer.
Layer Programmable Parameters: Multi-layer blending

- Blending is always active using alpha value
- Blending factors are configured through the LTDC_LxBFCR register
  - Fixed Constant alpha
  - Alpha pixel multiplied by the Constant Alpha
- The blending order is fixed and it is bottom up.
- Programmable Background Color for the bottom layer
Blending – Example 1

- Layer 1 blending with background
  - Background is black
  - Layer 2 is disabled.
Blending – Example 2

- Layer 1 and Layer 2 blending
  - Background color is black
  - Layer 1 Constant Alpha set to 100 %
  - Layer 2 Constant Alpha is set to:
Demo – Two Layers

- Example is using two layers
  - Layer 1 – static background picture
  - Layer 2 – moving ST logo with alpha channel

- ST logo is moved using layer 2 parameters only, no load of CPU

- Blending is done directly by Constant Alpha parameter, no load of CPU, done by LTDC controller directly
Layer Programmable Parameters: Color Keying

- **Transparent color (RGB)** can be defined for each layer in the LTDC_LxCKCR register.

- When the Color Keying is enabled, the current pixels is compared to the color key. If they match for the programmed RGB value, all channels (ARGB) of that pixel are set to 0.

- Color Keying can be enabled on the fly for each layer in the LTDC_LxCR register.
Demo - Color Keying

• Example is using two layers
  • Layer 1 – background picture “blue sky”
  • Layer 2 – ST logo with white background color

• Keying color is set to WHITE

• Disturbing artifacts can be removed by pre-processing using tools like Photoshop or Gimp, but quality of result is usually depending on the background anyway

• Best suitable for rectangular graphical objects

• Not optimal for photos – use alpha channel blending instead
Layer Programmable Parameters: Default Color

• Default Color
  • The default color (ARGB) is used outside the defined layer window or when a layer is disabled.
  • The default color is configured through the LTDC_LxDCCR register.
  • To bypass the default color, set the blending factor to transparent Alpha

• Tricky use case:
  • Layer 1 is enabled
  • Layer 2 is disabled, with default color black.
  • If blending factor is set to ConstAlpha=0xFF, No image will be displayed. Only black window that will be displayed (default color of Layer2 is black).
The shadowed registers are all the Layer 1 and Layer 2 registers except the CLUT register (LTDC_LxCLUTWR).

The shadow registers should not be modified again before the reload has been done.

The new written value can only be read after the reload has taken place.

Shadow registers can be reloaded to active registers by:
  - Immediate Reload
    Set IMR bit in LTDC_SRCR register
  - Vertical blanking reload
    Set VBR bit in LTDC_SRCR register
LTDC interrupts

- Two interrupts vectors:
  - LTDC global interrupt
    - Line interrupt
    - Register Reload
  - LTDC error interrupt
    - FIFO Underrun
    - Transfer Error

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interrupt event</th>
<th>Event flag</th>
<th>Enable bit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>LIF</td>
<td>LIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register Reload</td>
<td>RRIF</td>
<td>RRIEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIFO underrun</td>
<td>FUERRIF</td>
<td>FUERRIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Error</td>
<td>TERRIF</td>
<td>TERRIE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chrom-ART Accelerator™
STM32F4 Graphic Accelerator (DMA2D)

MMS-MCD Applications
Overview

Step 1 : Create the content in a frame buffer

- The frame buffer is build by composing graphical primitive
- This operation is done by the CPU running a graphical library software
- It can be accelerated by a dedicated hardware used with the CPU through the graphical library
- More often the frame buffer can be updated, more fluent will be the animations (animation fps)

Step 2 : Display the frame buffer

- The frame buffer is transferred to the display through a dedicated hardware interface
- Graphical oriented microcontroller are offering a TFT controller to drive directly the display
- The frame buffer must be sent at 60fps to have a perfect image color and stability (independently from the animation fps)
Graphical content creation
Creating something « cool »

- How the frame buffer is generated for creating a “cool” graphical interface to be displayed through the TFT controller?
Frame buffer construction

- The frame buffer is generated **drawing successively** all the graphic objects.
Frame buffer generation needs

- The resulting frame buffer is an **uncompressed bitmap** of the size of the screen.

- Each object to be drawn can be
  - A **Bitmap** with its own color coding (different from the final one), compressed or not
  - A **Vector Description** (a line, a circle with a texture...etc....)
  - (A Text)
### Bitmap
- High ROM usage
- No CPU usage if no compression, but can be needed for uncompressing
- Geometrical transformations limited and would need filtering
- Description standard bitmap files that are converted into C table

### Vector graphics
- Low ROM usage
- High CPU usage as image needs to be generated: **a GPU is mandatory**
- Geometrical transformations are natural
- Description through
  - Polygons: 3D graphics
  - Curves: 2D graphics
Example of vector pipeline

Stage 1: Path, Transform

Stage 6: Paint Generation
Stage 7: Image Interpolation
Stage 8: Blending and Antialiasing

No « implementable » Standard
Only basic objects can be rendered by SW

Too Heavy
STM32F42x/F43x Architecture

- **TFT controller** allows the interfacing
- **DMA2D** provides a **true graphical acceleration**
- **DMA2D** **offloads the CPU** for operations like rectangle filling, rectangle copy (with or without pixel format conversion), and image blending
- **DMA2D goes faster than the CPU** for the equivalent operation
Bitmaps
Overview

• Bitmap are an array representation of an image

• It shall have the at least following properties
  • Width (in pixel)
  • Height (in pixel)
  • Color mode (direct, indirect, ARGB8888, RGB565...etc...)
  • Color Look Up Table (optional)
• Blending consist in drawing an image onto another respecting the transparency information

• As a consequence blending implies to read 2 sources, then blend then write to the destination
Back to our « cool » interface

**Background**
Almost Uniform
L8 mode

**Button**
Round shape
Gradient
ARGB8888 mode

**Icon**
Complex shape
Many colors
ARGB8888 mode

**Fonts**
Specific management with A8 or A4 mode
Demo – Content Creation

- Moving successively graphical elements from internal FLASH into the frame buffer by Chrome-ART

DMA2D source parameters:
Location in memory, width, height, pixel format

DMA2D destination parameters:
Location in buffer, width, height, pixel format, line offset

DMA2D

foreground

output

background

FLASH content
Font management

• Bitmap fonts are managed only using alpha channel (transparency)

ROMed character bitmap (A8 or A4)  
Generated character bitmap with color information (ARGB8888, ARGB1555, ARGB4444) or (RGB888, RGB565)
Summary

- To generate my 24bpp frame buffer I will have to
  - Copy background from the ROM to the frame buffer with PFC L8 to RGB888
  - Copy buttons & icons from the ROM to the frame buffer with blending
  - Copy characters from the ROM to the frame buffer with PFC A4 to ARGB8888 and blending

- Many copy operations with pixel conversion. Can be done by CPU, but it’s very time consuming → HW acceleration helps.
Chrom-ART Accelerator (DMA2D)
• The Chrom-ART combines both a DMA2D and graphical oriented functionality for image blending and pixel format conversion.

• To offload the CPU of raw data copy, the Chrom-ART is able to copy a part of a graphic content into another part of a graphic content, or simply to fill an part of a graphic content with a specified color.

• In addition to raw data copy, additional functionality can be added such as image format conversion or image blending (image mixing with some transparency).
Typical data flow

- Creation of an object in a memory device by the Chrom-ART
- Update/Creation of the frame buffer in the external RAM by the Chrom-ART
- TFT controller data flow
Chrom-ART features

• AHB bus master with burst access to any system memory

• Programmable bitmap height, width and address in the memory

• Programmable data format (from 4-bit indirect up to 32-bit direct)

• Dedicated memory for color lookup table (CLUT) independent from LTDC

• Programmable address destination and format

• Optional image format conversion from direct or indirect color mode to direct color mode

• Optional blending machine with programmable transparency factor and/or with native transparency channel between to independent image input to the destination image.
Chrom-ART pixel pipeline

- Foreground:
  - FG FIFO
  - FG PFC

- Background:
  - BG FIFO
  - BG PFC

- Blender

- Output PFC
- Output FIFO
Address = Original_Address + (X + Original_Width * Y) * BPP
LineOffset = Original_Width - Width
## Supported color mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color mode</th>
<th>Input FG/BG CM[3:0]</th>
<th>Output CM[2:0]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARGB8888</td>
<td>0000</td>
<td>000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGB888</td>
<td>0001</td>
<td>001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGB565</td>
<td>0010</td>
<td>010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGB1555</td>
<td>0011</td>
<td>011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGB4444</td>
<td>0100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L8</td>
<td>0101</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL44</td>
<td>0110</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL88</td>
<td>0111</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A8</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLUT management

- When an indirect color mode L8, AL44 or AL88 is used, the bitmap CLUT must be loaded into the Chrom-ART.

- Each FG and BG has its own dedicated memory for CLUT.

- The CLUT can be loaded manually when no Chrom-ART operation are on going.

- The CLUT can be loaded automatically configuring the CLUT format (24-bit or 32-bit), the CLUT size and the CLUT address and setting the CLUT Start bit.
Supported operations

• 4 functional modes are supported
  • **Register to memory**: the destination bitmap is filled with the specified output color
  • **Memory to memory**: the data are fetch through the FG and are written to the destination bitmap without any color format modification (no PFC)
  • **Memory to memory with PFC**: the data are fetch through the FG and are written to the destination bitmap after being converted into the destination color format (PFC)
  • **Memory to memory with PFC and blending**: the data are fetched through the FG and the BG, are converted, are blended together and are written to the destination bitmap

• Once configured, the Chrom-ART is launched setting the Start bit

• The operation can be either suspended through the Suspend bit or aborted through the abort bit
Alpha modulation

- When the PFC is activated the Alpha value of the pixel can be modified as follow

  - Kept as it is

  - Replaced by a fixed one

  - Replaced by the current one multiplied by the fixed one

- This allows to perform easily fade in/out animations
Line Watermark

- For synchronization purpose, an **interrupt** can be generated when a specified line has been written by the Chrom-ART into the memory.

- The line number is defined by the filed LW[15:0] of the DMA2D_LWR register.
## Interrupts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interrupt</th>
<th>Flag</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Clear</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Error</td>
<td>TERIF</td>
<td>TERIE</td>
<td>CTERIF</td>
<td>An AHB error occurred during a Chrom-ART operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Complete</td>
<td>TCIF</td>
<td>TCIE</td>
<td>CTCIF</td>
<td>The programmed operation is complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Watermark</td>
<td>TWIF</td>
<td>TWIE</td>
<td>CTWIF</td>
<td>The Watermarked line has been written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLUT Access Error</td>
<td>CAEIF</td>
<td>CAEIE</td>
<td>CCAEIF</td>
<td>An error has been generated accessing the CLUT (CPU tried to access the CLUT when the Chrom-ART is being active)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLUT Transfer Complete</td>
<td>CTCIF</td>
<td>CTCIE</td>
<td>CCTCIF</td>
<td>The CLUT transfer is complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration Error</td>
<td>CEIF</td>
<td>CEIE</td>
<td>CCEIF</td>
<td>The Chrom-ART has been launched with an illegal configuration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integration with Graphic Library

- Chrom-ART integration is **transparent for the application**
- The low-level drivers of the graphical stack are upgraded to directly use Chrom-ART for data transfer, pixel format conversion and blending
- **CPU load is decreased** and **graphical operations are faster**
STM32 Solution for Graphics

- STM32 offers a unique graphical capability in the Cortex-M based MCU perimeter
  - Real TFT Controller for optimum display control
  - External memory interface to connect both Flash for static content and SRAM or SDRAM for dynamic content and frame buffer
  - On-chip hardware acceleration deeply coupled with graphical library
  - Standard graphical library taking advantage of on-chip graphical acceleration