VGA Colour Palette Shifter

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1 Introduction

With the SRAM containing 8-bit-wide words, it is occaisionally desired to have graphical output with an increased colour depth. This block allows you to specify a transition between an 8-bit colour value and an RGB565 output value. This block contains a 2**8 = 256 byte deep palette ram, which performs a colour translation when required.

In QSYS, this block slots in between the Video FB streamer (which pulls out data from the SRAM) and the Video RGB resampler.

2 Clocking

The Colour Palette Shifter runs on the same video clock as the VGA pixel buffer discussed in our team's other application note.

3 Interfaces

The interfaces used for this block are shown in the block diagram below.

4 Avalon-ST

Avalon-ST is the interface used for streaming data between components. This is the name of the interface that connects the video output components in the provided example Qsys system.

This bus consists of a data signal, as well as several control signals. The interface is not bi-directional, and must flow from source to sink.

For video data as we are using it, the Avalon-ST bus must be clocked at the same rate as the VGA pixel clock: 25.2MHz. Each clock cycle, a pixel is transferred over the `data` signal. The first pixel in a frame is transmitted with the `startofpacket` control signal asserted. Likewise, the final pixel in a frame is transmitted with the `endofpacket` control signal asserted. The sink will assert `ready` when it is able to accept new pixel data. In the case of a VGA

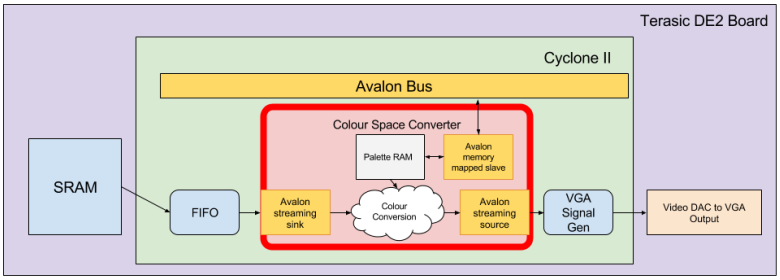

Figure 1: Block Diagram for Qsys Block

video signal, `ready` is asserted while pixels are being output to the display, and is de-asserted during the VGA blanking period. The `valid` control signal is asserted by the source when its data is ready to send. The Altera-provided video blocks expect this signal to always be asserted.

In figure 2, the end of transmitting a video frame is shown, with the last several pixels being transmitted, and then the first pixel of the following frame being sent, at which point the VGA controller begins a blanking period. Note that the next `data` value must be available before `ready` is asserted again.

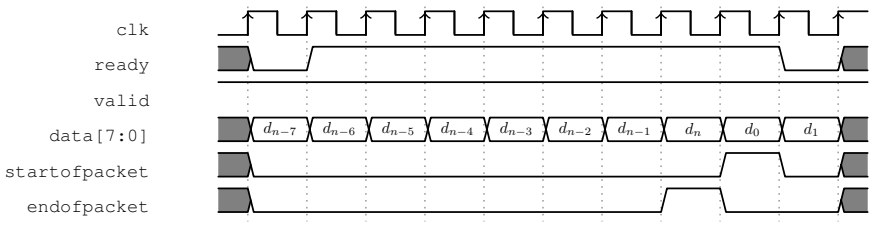

Figure 2: Avalon-ST Timing Diagram

5 Memory

The color palette shifter contains an instatiated dual port RAM. This dual-port RAM has one port attached as an Avalon slave, allowing the user to edit the palette. The other port of the RAM is attached to signals which are used in the state-machine that operates on the Avalon-ST bus in this block.

The addressing scheme for the palette is very simple. The 8-bit SRAM data "I", corresponds to an 8-bit address, which returns a 2-byte RGB565 value from dual_port[I].

6 Project Setup

The following sections detail how to configure a project using the provided video blocks.

6.1 Qsys

The QSYS configuration of this block follows the vga$_pix_bufconfiguration.Betweenthevideo_fb_streamerandth$

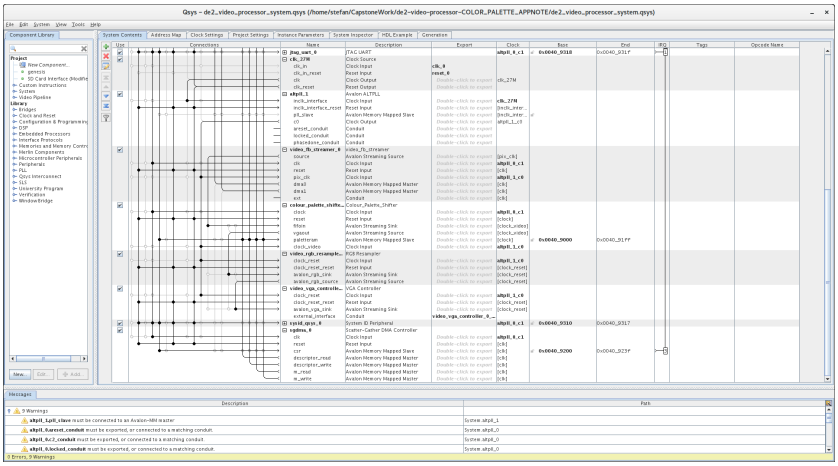

Figure 3: Colour Palette Shifter in QSYS system.

The Colour Palette Shifter Block is configured as shown in the following screenshots.

Finally, the configuration for the `video_rgb_resampler` is shown in figure **??**. This block must be configured to go from 16-bit colour to 30-bit colour, to match the interfaces of the `colour_space_converter` and the `video_vga_controller`.

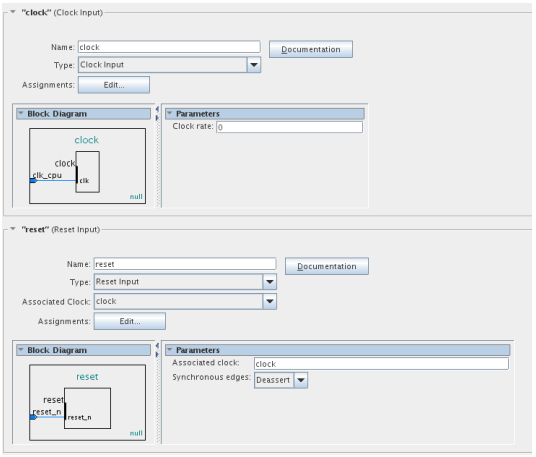

Figure 4: Configuration for `Colour_Space_Converter`

6.2 Quartus

You can use the Qsys-provided VHDL template to instantiate your system. This might look something like Listing 1 below.

Listing 1: Sample Top Level VHDL File

```
LIBRARY ieee;
USE ieee.std_logic_1164.all;

ENTITY vga_pix_buffer IS
 PORT
 (
  -- Clocks
  CLOCK_50      : in       std_logic;
  CLOCK_27      : in       std_logic;

  -- SDRAM on board
  DRAM_ADDR     : out      std_logic_vector (11 downto 0);
  DRAM_BA_0     : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_BA_1     : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_CAS_N    : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_CKE      : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_CLK      : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_CS_N     : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_DQ       : inout    std_logic_vector (15 downto 0);
  DRAM_LDQM     : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_UDQM     : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_RAS_N    : out      std_logic;
  DRAM_WE_N     : out      std_logic;

  -- SRAM on board
  SRAM_ADDR     : out      std_logic_vector (17 downto 0);
  SRAM_DQ       : inout    std_logic_vector (15 downto 0);
  SRAM_WE_N     : out      std_logic;
```

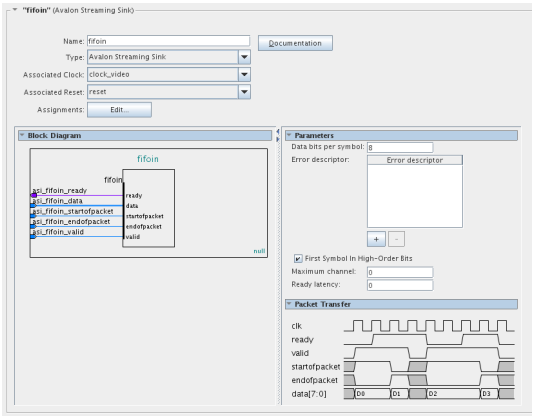

Figure 5: Configuration for `Colour_Space_Converter`

Figure 6: Configuration for `Colour_Space_Converter`

```
  SRAM_OE_N     : out       std_logic;
  SRAM_UB_N     : out       std_logic;
  SRAM_LB_N     : out       std_logic;
  SRAM_CE_N     : out       std_logic;

  -- VGA output
  VGA_R         : out       std_logic_vector (9 downto 0);
  VGA_G         : out       std_logic_vector (9 downto 0);
  VGA_B         : out       std_logic_vector (9 downto 0);
  VGA_CLK       : out       std_logic;
  VGA_BLANK     : out       std_logic;
  VGA_HS        : out       std_logic;
  VGA_VS        : out       std_logic;
  VGA_SYNC      : out       std_logic;

  -- Input buttons
  KEY           : in        std_logic_vector (3 downto 0)
 );
END ENTITY vga_pix_buffer;

ARCHITECTURE arch OF vga_pix_buffer IS

 COMPONENT vga_pix_buffer_system IS
  PORT (
   clk_50_clk                    : in    std_logic           := 'X';
   reset_50_reset_n              : in    std_logic           := 'X';
   clk_27_clk                    : in    std_logic           := 'X';
   reset_27_reset_n              : in    std_logic           := 'X';
   sram_0_external_interface_DQ                      : inout
       std_logic_vector(15 downto 0) := (others => 'X');
   sram_0_external_interface_ADDR                    : out
       std_logic_vector(17 downto 0);
   sram_0_external_interface_LB_N                    : out   std_logic;
```

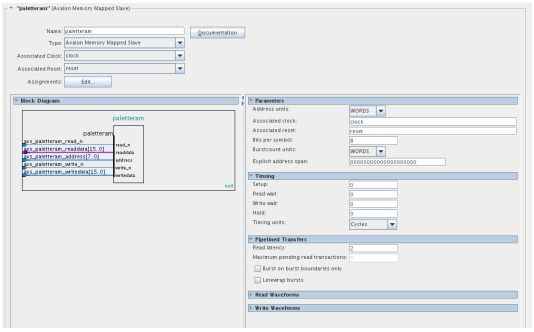

Figure 7: Configuration for `Colour_Space_Converter`

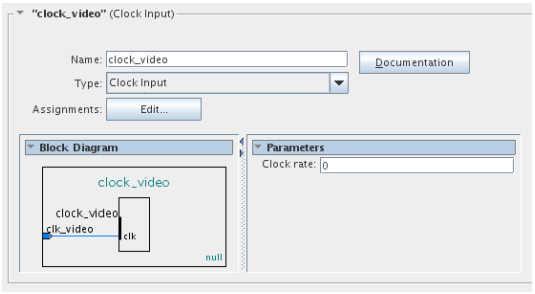

Figure 8: Configuration for `Colour_Space_Converter`

```
sram_0_external_interface_UB_N                  : out   std_logic;
sram_0_external_interface_CE_N                  : out   std_logic;
sram_0_external_interface_OE_N                  : out   std_logic;
sram_0_external_interface_WE_N                  : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_CLK   : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_HS    : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_VS    : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_BLANK : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_SYNC  : out   std_logic;
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_R     : out
    std_logic_vector(9 downto 0);
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_G     : out
    std_logic_vector(9 downto 0);
video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_B     : out
    std_logic_vector(9 downto 0);
sdram_0_wire_addr                               : out
    std_logic_vector(11 downto 0);
sdram_0_wire_ba                                 : out
    std_logic_vector(1 downto 0);
sdram_0_wire_cas_n                              : out   std_logic;
sdram_0_wire_cke                                : out   std_logic;
sdram_0_wire_cs_n                               : out   std_logic;
sdram_0_wire_dq                                 : inout
    std_logic_vector(15 downto 0) := (others => 'X');
```

```
   sdram_0_wire_dqm                                : out
       std_logic_vector(1 downto 0);
   sdram_0_wire_ras_n                              : out   std_logic;
   sdram_0_wire_we_n                               : out   std_logic;
   altpll_sys_dram_c0_clk                          : out   std_logic
  );
 END COMPONENT vga_pix_buffer_system;

 -- Signals to interface with DRAM
 SIGNAL BA   : std_logic_vector (1 downto 0);
 SIGNAL DQM  : std_logic_vector (1 downto 0);

BEGIN

 DRAM_BA_1 <= BA(1);
 DRAM_BA_0 <= BA(0);

 DRAM_UDQM <= DQM(1);
 DRAM_LDQM <= DQM(0);

 sys0 : COMPONENT vga_pix_buffer_system
  PORT MAP (
   clk_50_clk                                    => CLOCK_50,
   reset_50_reset_n                              => KEY(0),
   clk_27_clk                                    => CLOCK_27,
   reset_27_reset_n                              => KEY(0),
   sram_0_external_interface_DQ                  => SRAM_DQ,
   sram_0_external_interface_ADDR                => SRAM_ADDR,
   sram_0_external_interface_LB_N                => SRAM_LB_N,
   sram_0_external_interface_UB_N                => SRAM_UB_N,
   sram_0_external_interface_CE_N                => SRAM_CE_N,
   sram_0_external_interface_OE_N                => SRAM_OE_N,
   sram_0_external_interface_WE_N                => SRAM_WE_N,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_CLK   => VGA_CLK,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_HS    => VGA_HS,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_VS    => VGA_VS,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_BLANK => VGA_BLANK,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_SYNC  => VGA_SYNC,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_R     => VGA_R,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_G     => VGA_G,
   video_vga_controller_0_external_interface_B     => VGA_B,
   sdram_0_wire_addr                             => DRAM_ADDR,
   sdram_0_wire_ba                               => BA,
   sdram_0_wire_cas_n                            => DRAM_CAS_N,
   sdram_0_wire_cke                              => DRAM_CKE,
   sdram_0_wire_cs_n                             => DRAM_CS_N,
   sdram_0_wire_dq                               => DRAM_DQ,
   sdram_0_wire_dqm                              => DQM,
   sdram_0_wire_ras_n                            => DRAM_RAS_N,
   sdram_0_wire_we_n                             => DRAM_WE_N,
   altpll_sys_dram_c0_clk                        => DRAM_CLK
  );

END ARCHITECTURE arch;
```

6.3 Nios II SBT for Eclipse

This section is identical to the vga_{pixbuf} *application note as this application note extends the previous one.*

When you create a new "Nios II Application and BSP from Template" project in Eclipse, you must manually configure the memory map used in the BSP project. This configuration is shown in figure 9. In particular note the definitions for `sdram_video_0` and `sdram_sys_0`. This must match your planned memory layout. If you compare the memory addresses in figure 9 and the `SDRAM_VIDEO_OFFSET` value in the sample code in Listing **??**, they should refer to the same location in memory.

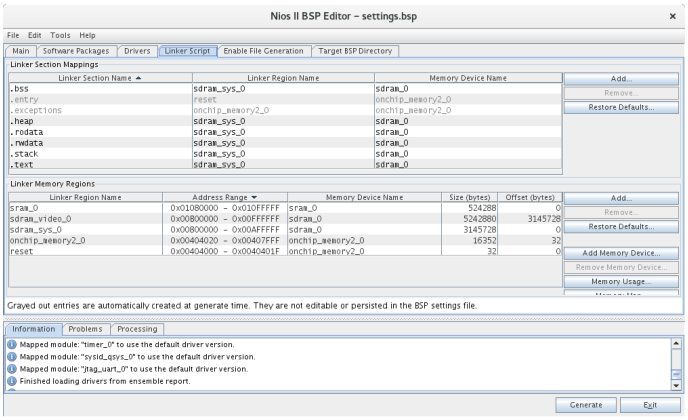

Figure 9: BSP Linker Configuration

7 Sample Code

The following code draws a test palette, switches some

Listing 2: Sample Program that Generates a Test Pattern, then changes the color

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <io.h>
#include <system.h>
#include <sys/alt_stdio.h>
#include <string.h>

unsigned int palette_ega[16] =
    /* EGA Colour Palette */
    /* Black        Blue         Green       Cyan          Red */
    {/*00*/ 0x0000, /*01*/0x0015, /*02*/0x2704, /*03*/0x1E79, /*04*/0
        xA800,
     /*     Magenta       Brown   Light Grey     Dark Grey   Bright
         Blue*/
     /*05*/ 0xA815, /*06*/0xE3C1, /*07*/0xAD55, /*08*/0x52AA, /*09*/0
         x52BF,
```

```
     /* BGreen            BCyan         Bred       B Magenta     B
        Yellow*/
     /*10*/ 0x57EA, /*11*/0x57FF, /*12*/0xFAAA, /*13*/0xFABF, /*14*/0
        xFFEA,
     0xFFFF /*B White */
    };

unsigned int palette_stephen[256] =
    /* Stephen's RGB323 -> RGB565 Palette */
    {0x0 , 0xa , 0x15 , 0x1f , 0x120 , 0x12a , 0x135 , 0x13f , 0x240 ,
    0x24a , 0x255 , 0x25f , 0x360 , 0x36a , 0x375 , 0x37f , 0x480 ,
    0x48a , 0x495 , 0x49f , 0x5a0 , 0x5aa , 0x5b5 , 0x5bf , 0x6c0 ,
    0x6ca , 0x6d5 , 0x6df , 0x7e0 , 0x7ea , 0x7f5 , 0x7ff , 0x2000 ,
    0x200a , 0x2015 , 0x201f , 0x2120 , 0x212a , 0x2135 , 0x213f , 0
        x2240 ,
    0x224a , 0x2255 , 0x225f , 0x2360 , 0x236a , 0x2375 , 0x237f , 0
        x2480 ,
    0x248a , 0x2495 , 0x249f , 0x25a0 , 0x25aa , 0x25b5 , 0x25bf , 0
        x26c0 ,
    0x26ca , 0x26d5 , 0x26df , 0x27e0 , 0x27ea , 0x27f5 , 0x27ff , 0
        x4800 ,
    0x480a , 0x4815 , 0x481f , 0x4920 , 0x492a , 0x4935 , 0x493f , 0
        x4a40 ,
    0x4a4a , 0x4a55 , 0x4a5f , 0x4b60 , 0x4b6a , 0x4b75 , 0x4b7f , 0
        x4c80 ,
    0x4c8a , 0x4c95 , 0x4c9f , 0x4da0 , 0x4daa , 0x4db5 , 0x4dbf , 0
        x4ec0 ,
    0x4eca , 0x4ed5 , 0x4edf , 0x4fe0 , 0x4fea , 0x4ff5 , 0x4fff , 0
        x6800 ,
    0x680a , 0x6815 , 0x681f , 0x6920 , 0x692a , 0x6935 , 0x693f , 0
        x6a40 ,
    0x6a4a , 0x6a55 , 0x6a5f , 0x6b60 , 0x6b6a , 0x6b75 , 0x6b7f , 0
        x6c80 ,
    0x6c8a , 0x6c95 , 0x6c9f , 0x6da0 , 0x6daa , 0x6db5 , 0x6dbf , 0
        x6ec0 ,
    0x6eca , 0x6ed5 , 0x6edf , 0x6fe0 , 0x6fea , 0x6ff5 , 0x6fff , 0
        x9000 ,
    0x900a , 0x9015 , 0x901f , 0x9120 , 0x912a , 0x9135 , 0x913f , 0
        x9240 ,
    0x924a , 0x9255 , 0x925f , 0x9360 , 0x936a , 0x9375 , 0x937f , 0
        x9480 ,
    0x948a , 0x9495 , 0x949f , 0x95a0 , 0x95aa , 0x95b5 , 0x95bf , 0
        x96c0 ,
    0x96ca , 0x96d5 , 0x96df , 0x97e0 , 0x97ea , 0x97f5 , 0x97ff , 0
        xb000 ,
    0xb00a , 0xb015 , 0xb01f , 0xb120 , 0xb12a , 0xb135 , 0xb13f , 0
        xb240 ,
    0xb24a , 0xb255 , 0xb25f , 0xb360 , 0xb36a , 0xb375 , 0xb37f , 0
        xb480 ,
    0xb48a , 0xb495 , 0xb49f , 0xb5a0 , 0xb5aa , 0xb5b5 , 0xb5bf , 0
        xb6c0 ,
    0xb6ca , 0xb6d5 , 0xb6df , 0xb7e0 , 0xb7ea , 0xb7f5 , 0xb7ff , 0
        xd800 ,
    0xd80a , 0xd815 , 0xd81f , 0xd920 , 0xd92a , 0xd935 , 0xd93f , 0
        xda40 ,
    0xda4a , 0xda55 , 0xda5f , 0xdb60 , 0xdb6a , 0xdb75 , 0xdb7f , 0
        xdc80 ,
```

```
    0xdc8a , 0xdc95 , 0xdc9f , 0xdda0 , 0xddaa , 0xddb5 , 0xddbf , 0
        xdec0 ,
    0xdeca , 0xded5 , 0xdedf , 0xdfe0 , 0xdfea , 0xdff5 , 0xdfff , 0
        xf800 ,
    0xf80a , 0xf815 , 0xf81f , 0xf920 , 0xf92a , 0xf935 , 0xf93f , 0
        xfa40 ,
    0xfa4a , 0xfa55 , 0xfa5f , 0xfb60 , 0xfb6a , 0xfb75 , 0xfb7f , 0
        xfc80 ,
    0xfc8a , 0xfc95 , 0xfc9f , 0xfda0 , 0xfdaa , 0xfdb5 , 0xfdbf , 0
        xfec0 ,
    0xfeca , 0xfed5 , 0xfedf , 0xffe0 , 0xffea , 0xfff5 , 0xffff };

unsigned int palette_magenta[256] = {0xA815};

unsigned int bunch_o_blues[256] = {0x000 , 0x001 , 0x002 , 0x003 , 0
    x004 , 0x005 , 0x006 , 0x007 , 0x008 ,
    0x009 , 0x00a , 0x00b , 0x00c , 0x00d , 0x00e , 0x00f , 0x0010 ,
    0x0011 , 0x0012 , 0x0013 , 0x0014 , 0x0015 , 0x0016 , 0x0017 , 0
        x0018 ,
    0x0019 , 0x001a , 0x001b , 0x001c , 0x001d , 0x001e , 0x001f };

unsigned int bunch_o_reds[256] = {0x000 , 0x010 , 0x020 , 0x030 , 0x040
     , 0x050 , 0x060 , 0x070 , 0x080 ,
    0x090 , 0x0a0 , 0x0b0 , 0x0c0 , 0x0d0 , 0x0e0 , 0x0f0 , 0x0100 ,
    0x0110 , 0x0120 , 0x0130 , 0x0140 , 0x0150 , 0x0160 , 0x0170 , 0
        x0180 ,
    0x0190 , 0x01a0 , 0x01b0 , 0x01c0 , 0x01d0 , 0x01e0 , 0x01f0};



unsigned int* palettes[6] = {&palette_ega[0], &palette_stephen[0], &
    palette_magenta[0], &bunch_o_blues[0], &bunch_o_reds[0]};
unsigned int palettes_legnth = 5;



//Make a function to switch the palettes given a pointer to a palette
    array.
void switchPalette(unsigned int* palette, int length){

  int i = 0;
  for (i = 0; i < length; i++){
    IOWR_16DIRECT(COLOUR_PALETTE_SHIFTER_0_BASE, 2*i, 0x0000);
    IOWR_16DIRECT(COLOUR_PALETTE_SHIFTER_0_BASE, 2*i, palette[i]);
  }


}


void printPalette(int n){
  // Print everything in the palette ram, upto int colours.
  int i;
  unsigned int c;

  unsigned int results[512] = {'\0'};
```

```
  for (i = 0; i < n; i++){
    c = IORD_16DIRECT(COLOUR_PALETTE_SHIFTER_0_BASE, 2*i); //offset
        multiplied by 2 to be on 16-bit boundaries.
    //alt_printf("palette[ %x ]: %x ", 2*i, c);
    results[i] = c;
  }

  for (i = 0; i < n; i++){
    alt_printf("palette[ %x ]: %x ", 2*i, results[i]);
  }

}

int main()
{


  unsigned int row = 0;
  unsigned int col = 0;
  unsigned int delay = 0;

  unsigned int color;
  int i;



  // Clear the screen first.
  alt_putstr("Clear the screen\n");
  for (col = 0; col < 640; col = col + 4){
    for (row = 0; row < 480; row++){
      color = 0;
      IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, color << 24 | color
          << 16 | color << 8 | color << 0);
    }
  }


  //Switch palettes here (to EGA colour palette)
  printPalette(16);
  switchPalette(palette_ega, 16);
  printPalette(16);

  alt_putstr("Screen painting demo\n");

  for (i = 0; i < 16; i++){
    alt_printf("Colour");
    for (delay = 0; delay < 700/*2000*/; delay++){
      unsigned int tdelay = delay;
      for (tdelay; tdelay > 0; tdelay--){}
    }

    for (row=0; row<480; row++){
      for (col = 0; col < 640; col=col+4){
        color = i;
        IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, color << 24 | color
            << 16 | color << 8 | color << 0);
      }
```

```
  }
}



alt_putstr("\nStarting␣Stephen␣Test␣Pattern\n");
int p = 0;
for (p = 0; p < 8; p++) {

  switchPalette(palettes[p%palettes_legnth], 256);

  alt_putstr("Clear␣the␣screen\n");
  for (col = 0; col < 640; col = col + 4){
    for (row = 0; row < 480; row++){
      color = 0;
      IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, color << 24 | color
           << 16 | color << 8 | color << 0);
    }
  }


  //Now draw the test pattern
  for (row = 0; row < 480; row++)
  {
    for (col = 0; col < 640; col = col + 4)
    {
      color = ((row + col) % 256) << 0 | ((row + col) % 256) << 8 |
          ((row + col) % 256) << 16 | ((row + col) % 256) << 24;
      if (row == 0 || row == 479)
      {
        IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, 0xFFFFFFFF);
      }
      else if (col == 0)
      {
        IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, 0x000000FF |
            color);
      }
      else if (col == 636)
      {
        IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, 0xFF000000 |
            color);
      }
      else
      {
        IOWR_32DIRECT(SRAM_0_BASE, row * 640 + col, color);
      }
    }
  }


}
```

```
  alt_putstr("Done.\n");

  // Do Stephen's pattern display.

  // And switch the palettes.

  return 0;
}
```