Subject: Re: Is it safe for me to come out?
Posted by davidf on Fri, 18 Aug 2000 07:00:00 GMT

Ben Tupper (pemaquidriver@tidewater.net) writes:

> Well, I'm back from two weeks of summer school to prep me for the big
> IDL-EPA exam. (David, I still don't understand what mowing your lawn
> and washing your car has to do with the test.)

All I can say, Ben, is that this is why you are *taking* the test and
not *giving* it. Think of it as a Zen koan and you will have
more luck. :-)

> I have a question regarding the character set used for contouring in
> direct graphics. I have fooled with !P.Font and C_Charsize but have yet
> to get results that will be satisfactory for on-screen presentations.
> The characters tend to be much like a doctor's penmanship. Is there a
> secret incantation or special type of incense I should burn to yield
> more readable characters when using the direct graphics CONTOUR command?

Yes, there is a special type of incense, but you can't purchase
it until you pass the exam. It's sort of the IDL version of the
Catch-22, I guess.

What you could do is introduce your presentation as having
been done in Dr. IDL. That would impress some people, probably.

Failing that, you could make your display screen VERY big
and try true-type fonts. I've sometimes tried (with varying
amounts of success) to make a Z-buffer window 4X times the
size of the display window, and draw with large true-type
character sizes (you have to increase the thickness of
everything else too, with this technique). Then I rebin
this huge window to about 1/4 its size for display.

As I say, I've gotten decent viewgraphics occasionally with
this technique.

Or, you could make a PostScript file with true-type fonts,
and scan these images into TIFF files, which you could
display in sequence in IDL.

Or, ...

Well, you could just do what I do. Wave your hands
quickly and draw everyone's attention away to something
other than the contour labels. This has a surprisingly

high success rate without actually solving the problem.
A real boon for programmers working by the hour. :-)

Cheers,

David

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