
Subject: Re: IDL 5.4. Neato. NOT.

Posted by [Paul van Delst](#) on Mon, 30 Oct 2000 14:04:43 GMT

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"Joseph B. Gurman" wrote:

>
> In article <39F9F19A.7912306D@ncep.noaa.gov>, Paul van Delst
> <pvandelst@ncep.noaa.gov> wrote:
>
>> p.s. FWIW, I applaud RSI for not caving and paying license fees for the
>> LZW/GIF stuff.
>
> Without any real details of the terms and conditions, I can't concur.

I made that statement somewhat based on my rather isolated and insulated usage of IDL but mostly on principle (I reckon Unisys pulled a fast and dirty one) rather than real world economies such as affects Joseph Gurman and Co. After reading his summary, it could be quite a soul- (and budget-) destroying job having to convert a bunch of code to input and output different image formats (despite Dennis Boccippio's suggested solution).

Maybe a better solution would have been for RSI/Kodak to offer licenses just for that capability, e.g. you pay extra \$\$ and you get sent an extra "FEATURE" line for your license.dat for LZW/GIF stuff. I have that option for my (unix based) Fortran/C/C++ compilers (i.e. extra \$\$, access to more compilers).

So, at the risk of it seeming I change my mind more than my underpants, I guess I agree with Joseph Gurman.

Having said all that, I have never used IDL's ability to create GIF output mostly because I think the text looks really crappy (although I recognise there are ways to improve the look of the text output...not enough for my liking though). I create PS output and then use Unix utilities (which are free or site licensed) to convert the PS->GIF. For cases where I have done this on a semi-regular basis, I have run IDL within a shell script so folding in the convert process was trivial (read: No SPAWN use). This, of course, isn't a solution for Windows based (or Mac?) users.

paulv

p.s. My comments above are not to be confused with those for whom I currently work. Me just peon.

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Paul van Delst Ph: (301) 763-8000 x7274
CIMSS @ NOAA/NCEP Fax: (301) 763-8545
Rm.202, 5200 Auth Rd. Email: pvandelst@ncep.noaa.gov
Camp Springs MD 20746
