
Subject: Re: gif license

Posted by [Dennis Boccippio](#) on Thu, 01 Nov 2001 02:46:01 GMT

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In article <slrn9u07p6.cht.nobody@pooh.nrel.gov>,
nobody@nowhere.com (Steve Smith<steven_smith>) wrote:

>
> I am wondering the following: since IDL is an interpretive language, i.e. you
> cannot make standalone programs, then any potential user of code you may give
> out would have an IDL license, and presumably would not have the GIF/LZW
> enabled if they had not contacted Unisys and secured a license. So where is
> the problem? It would seem to me that your code would be useless to anyone
> without this license, am I correct? So I don't see how distributing your code
> is a problem (you are NOT distributing the ability to read/write GIF).

Seems logical; the portions of the apps with GIF export functionality
would be useless, although I'm not sure that would immunize us against
some hypothetical Unisys action, given the language of the agreement.
Actually, that raises a question - we haven't yet upgraded from 5.3
(because of the GIF issue and legacy code). How does 5.4+ IDL handle
READ_GIF/WRITE_GIF? Do they fail to compile? Or simply perform
nothing unless activated?

Personally, I'm torn on the LZW issue. On one hand, I think it's
perfectly reasonable to protect intellectual property, on the other
hand, I'm still peeved over U's handling of the issue several years
back, which smacked of a bait-and-switch, and doesn't seem corporate
behavior worth rewarding...

- DJB
