
Subject: Re: gif license

Posted by nobody@nowhere.com (S on Wed, 31 Oct 2001 15:59:11 GMT

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On Tue, 30 Oct 2001 23:41:02 -0600, Dennis Boccippio

<djboccip@hotmail.com> wrote:

> In article <onwv1drj29.fsf@cow.physics.wisc.edu>,

> Craig Markwardt <craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu> wrote:

>

>> Dennis Boccippio <djboccip@hotmail.com> writes:

>>> Thanks for the info, Michael. Haven't heard back from Unisys yet

>>> ourselves but was wondering whether the other shoe would drop or not

>>> (sounds like it will). I'm assuming your questionnaire responses were

>>> of the 'we have no interest in turning a profit off of LZW in IDL'

>>> variety?

>>>

>>> Has anybody successfully gotten a freebie Unisys agreement?

>>>

>>> - Dennis Boccippio, NASA/MSFC SD-60

>>

>> One should also be aware that the original patent held by Unisys,

>>

>> US4558302: High speed data compression and decompression

>> apparatus and method

>>

>> is due to expire in June of 2003. Before one spends a serious amount

>> of money on the license, one should also look at the time frame.

>>

>> Craig

>

> Update: we got hit with the \$475 'processing fee' as well (NASA/MSFC

> for their 'governmental use' agreement) but no other fees. Restrictions

> include no redistribution of software incorporating LZW functionality,

> which I read to mean we can't send homegrown IDL code with

> READ_GIF/WRITE_GIF functionality to our data users. Debating whether or

> not its worth it... the 6/03 expiration info is helpful...

>

> - DJB

>

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).

--

Steve S.

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remove NOSPAM before replying
