Subject: Re: IDL/Linux color table problems
Posted by Karl Schultz on Tue, 03 Dec 2002 17:22:02 GMT
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"David Oesch" <oesch@giub.unibe.ch> wrote in message
news:3DECC898.4070306@giub.unibe.ch...
> Try
>
> http://www.rsinc.com/services/output.cfm?tip_id=3318

This tip really only applies to IDL 5.5 on some 24-bit X servers. The OP is using IDL 5.4 and probably an 8-bit X server.

It is hard to diagnose the problem exactly, but this sounds like the classic X "technicolor" problem that is common to many color intensive applications running on 8-bit X servers. There is some discussion of this issue in the IDL docs. The basic problem arises because multiple X clients are competing for a limited set of colors in the 256-color X color table (colormap). Here are a few general suggestions:

- Configure your X server to start in 16-bit or 24-bit mode, if your video system supports it. If you are running XFree86, try one of the various X configuator programs that come with your Linux distro.
- Reduce the color requirements of your other clients. This might mean shutting down some "color hogs" like image editors and viewers.
- Your window manager and desktop gadgets are clients too. Many desktops have applets that let you set the number of colors your desktop will use up. In the extreme case, you can perhaps get it down to two - black and white, as is possible with CDE.
- Reduce the color demands of IDL. See the IDL help items for using color in the X windows environment.

If you are absolutely stuck on 8-bit and your IDL app needs to display (nearly) 256 private colors, then it is pretty hard to avoid the flashing "technicolor" effect. A lot of 8-bit X windows users accept and tolerate this effect; it has been around for over a decade.

We can get into more detail here, if you like.

Karl