Subject: Re: Font differences between IDL 5.6 and IDL 6.0
Posted by Karl Schultz on Fri, 27 Feb 2004 16:22:01 GMT

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"Lynn" <lwhanigan@hotmail.com> wrote in message
news:ef2dfe4c.0402270632.5a50ff99@posting.google.com...
> There seems to be a difference in which IDL5.6 and 6.0 handles fonts.
> IDL6.0 does not appear to be consistant when displaying characters in
> size and alignment. For me, new lines do not always line up
> vertically. In addition, lines with only text, (i.e. no numbers),
> seem to appear smaller than do lines with text and numbers. Has
> anyone else encountered this? And if so, have you found a way to fix
> these problems? Or maybe know what IDL is doing differently? I've
> appended a small test program which illustrates my problem.

IDL 6.0 uses the Freetype library to render text glyphs for Object Graphics.
One of the techniques Freetype uses to improve glyph appearance is called
"hinting" or grid-fitting. Sometimes the library may jiggle the position of
a glyph slightly in order to position it better on the pixel grid for better
appearance, and this may be causing the alignment issues you are noticing.
In most cases, the result is much better than the triangle rendering used
before 6.0.

You can revert back to the triangle rendering if you really want to by using
RENDER_METHOD=1 on IDLgrText. I noticed that your test is making printer
output. On a printer device, which has a LOT of resolution, the text
rendered with triangles can look really good, so that may not be a bad
choice when printing.

Karl