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Subject: Re: Force 8bit display ?

Posted by [Nigel Wade](#) on Thu, 02 Feb 2006 09:49:41 GMT

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L. Testut wrote:

> Hi everybody  
> Do you know if it is possible to set the display depth at 8 bit  
> instead of 24bits. I'll try :  
> IDL> device, /pseudo\_color ;but values are always set to default  
> values  
> By default when I start IDL visual\_depth=24, and visual\_name=TrueColor  
> and Decomposed=1. I work on a laptop under LINUX debian.

Whether you can get an 8-bit display depends entirely on your X server and your graphics card. Very few PC graphics cards have the ability to support different bit-depth displays simultaneously, so you are restricted to either an 8-bit display or a 24-bit display; you can't have both at the same time. The XFree86/Xorg X server doesn't currently provide any simulation of this either.

To see if your X server/graphics card supports different depth visuals you can ask it. Run the command 'xdpyinfo' and it will tell you every visual that it supports. If there is no PseudoColor 8 then you are out of luck. When you ask IDL for a 8bit PseudoColor, if there is none available it will pick another which most closely matches the one you asked for. How close that is is rather "fuzzy".

If you really, really want an 8 bit display you could start up another X server running at 8 bit, and then use that for IDL display. When I've done this on RedHat I get two X displays, one accessed via the normal ctrl-alt-F7 and the second by ctrl-alt-F8.

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