
Subject: A defense of decomposed color
Posted by [JD Smith](#) on Mon, 30 Oct 2006 23:46:58 GMT
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I wonder if those of you using decomposed color can persuade me of its utility. Though color tables are perfect for image visualization, they are wanting for "system" colors for plot symbols, overlays, etc. It's frustrating to keep track of them, and different apps have different conventions, and can step on each other's feet, causing various undesirable effects.

I presume the reason many of us still use undecomposed color is from the 8bit heritage, when there was no such thing as decomposed color. Do '00FFFF'x-loving people simply assume everyone has a device capable of interpreting 24bit, decomposed color (probably about 95% true, these days)? How do you handle switching back and forth from decomposed (for plot symbols, say) to indexed (for displaying images)? Do you find it really solves the headaches associated with saving a few colors for drawing in high indices, vs. the added juggling needed to switch back and forth among decomposed and non-decomposed color, etc.? What happens if you switch to decomposed color on an 8-bit display system?

I'm ready to come around to embracing direct color specification with no color table intermediary, but I think I need a bit of persuasion.

JD
