Subject: Re: iTools: lines too thick to publish?
Posted by Benjamin Hornberger on Wed, 08 Nov 2006 15:59:35 GMT
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Dave wrote:
> Hello,
>
> I've just received some feedback from a journal that the figures I
> created with iTools has lines that are simply too thick for
> publication. I saved the figure as a vector-based .eps file so this
> isn't a low-res bitmap. The figure has quite a few lines on it
> (contours, vectors and trajectories) and I recall trying to make the
> lines thinner when I originally created the figure. A co-worker opened
> the file in CorelDraw 12 and was able to change all of the 1 px lines
> to 0.25 - 0.50 px which should satisfy the journal. Nevertheless, I'd
> very much like a way to get thinner lines when using iMap/iPlot. I
> fiddled for a few hours this morning to get fractional line widths into
> the iPlot dialog boxes but to no avail. Adding a few fractional
> thicknesses in the drop-down menu would be great (i.e. 0.25, 0.5, 0.75)
> but I don't really understand why the thickness cannot be varied to any
> decimal value? My older routines using map_set and contour gave .eps
> plots with much thinner lines but I would hate to go back to
> non-interactive graphics with what I'm working on at the moment.
>
> Thanks.
> Dave
>

The documentation for iPlot says that the line thickness (THICK keyword) can be 1.0 to 10.0 pt. I just tried setting it to <1.0 -- it doesn't complain but just sets it back to 1.0. It looks like that's all you can get. You can set it to fractional values between 1.0 and 10.0 though.

Using direct graphics, the units seem to be different. A thickness of 1.0 (the PLOT documentation doesn't mention any units here) turns out as 0.28 pt in Illustrator, and it actually can be set to <1.0 in IDL.

It looks like this is a (major) limitation of iTools or probably object graphics in general.

As a side note, I have also found it annoying that in the iTools interface one can't set the line width to any fractional value between 1.0 and 10.0 even though this is possible in principle (by using the THICK keyword when the data is first plotted, or by controlling the iTools from the command line as described in Appendix A of the iTools Developer's Guide).

Benjamin