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Subject: Re: .sav format

Posted by [JD Smith](#) on Mon, 05 Feb 2007 17:58:07 GMT

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On Sun, 04 Feb 2007 02:04:09 -0500, Craig Markwardt wrote:

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>
> "mgalloy@gmail.com" <mgalloy@gmail.com> writes:
>> On Jan 29, 1:49 pm, JD Smith <jdsm...@as.arizona.edu> wrote:
>>> The license grants "the author of this software, and to all IDL users,
>>> a license to use and redistribute this software in source or binary
>>> form, subject to the following conditions", so they've already given
>>> us the license (restrictive though it may be).
>>
>> To "use and redistribute this software" (i.e. CMSVLIB), but the
>> original poster wanted documentation of the .sav format (presumably so
>> they could write their own software).
>
> The documentation of the format is unencumbered by any license other
> than Creative Commons.
```

The "license" does seem to indicate that *anyone* needs permission to create a tool to read .SAV files, whether or not they have agreed to an EULA:

"Non-RSI supplied software that reads or writes files in the IDL Save/Restore format must have a license from Research Systems explicitly granting the right to do so. In this case, the license will be included with the software for your inspection. Please report software that does not have such a license to Research Systems, Inc."

They haven't yet wielded the DMCA hammer, but I don't doubt that they would if they felt it necessary. There is a reverse engineering clause in the DMCA, but I'm not sure to what degree it applies:

<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/openlaw/DVD/1201.html#f>

I for once don't see the point in so jealously guarding a format: it's a perfect way to ensure it never sees wide use.

JD

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