
Subject: Re: animated png: a new format for scientific animations

Posted by [Vince Hradil](#) on Wed, 21 May 2008 15:38:44 GMT

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On May 21, 9:28 am, pgri...@gmail.com wrote:

- > Hi folks,
- >
- > production of animations (i.e. movies) is one
- > perennial subject of discussion in this group.
- > One of the main difficulties is the large number
- > of mutually incompatible formats, not always
- > equally well supported by different platforms
- > and softwares.
- >
- > Furthermore, scientific animations are not well
- > suited to lossy compression schemes (i.e. jpeg,
- > mpeg etc.) such that the quality is in general
- > low, or the file size huge when higher bitrate
- > is used.
- >
- > For still images, the alternative png format
- > has been available for some time, and has
- > become the format of choice for plots etc.
- > So it seems quite logical that
- > png animations should be the way to go.
- > The mozilla folks have come up with a new
- > specification for animated pngs that is supported
- > in firefox 3. I tried out the new format and
- > I can confidently say that the quality is much
- > better than any other movie format I have ever
- > seen, and the file size is quite reasonable.
- >
- > I've put up an example, but bear in mind that
- > to be able to see the animated png you'll need
- > the firefox 3 beta (release candidate)!
- >
- > The web page show the animated png and 3 quicktime
- > movies of increasing quality (and file size!).
- >
- > <http://hea-www.harvard.edu/~pgrigis/scianim/index.html>
- >
- > Of course, the availability (finally!) of a good
- > format specification for scientific animations does
- > not mean that it is easy or convenient to use.
- > The main problem now are the fact that only a few
- > player and encoders are available.
- >
- > On the other hand, you can play the movies with

> firefox 3 and you can encode the images using
> a (closed source) command line java utility
> (<http://www.reto-hoehener.ch/japng/>), therefore
> at least a minimum of multiplatform support already
> exist.
>
> Anyway, if you are willing to live with the limited
> support for the format, it will probably give you
> the best quality for your scientific animations
> (and arguably is still a better solution than having
> IDL open and issuing for i=0,100 do tv,img[*,*],i] ;-)
>
> Ciao,
> Paolo

Nice - thanks for the demo. I'd also like to point out that XnView
(v1.92 or greater) can view the APNG.
