Subject: Re: transparent background for line plot in IDL 8.0
Posted by David Grier on Wed, 15 Sep 2010 20:48:55 GMT

On 9/15/10 9:23 AM, teddyallen wrote:
> I have a question that seems to be simple, but the answer continues to
> elude me....
> I have a straight-forward 2D plot (rainfall time series) that I want
> to import to powerpoint, BUT I would like to import it with a
> transparent background. Basically, I just want the plot with no
> background color. I have read the previous posts, but am lead to
> believe that 8.0 should be more simple.
>
> Below is my plot command:
>
> p=PLOT(leeTRMMday, color
> ='magenta',yrange=[0,0.5],thick=2,xticks=12,xtickname = months,$
>   title='1998 - 2009 TRMM daily climatology',
> background='transparent')
>
> Is the BACKGROUND keyword used properly? The plot is what I want, but
> the background is still white.There are no compilation errors. What
> exactly does the BACKGROUND keyword in the PLOT procedure represent?
> Is this not the correct way to reference a clear background for a
> plot?
>
> Thank you for any hints.
> cheers,
> teddy allen

 From reading graphic__define.pro, which provides the basic object
definitions for the plot function, it appears that your request
to set BACKGROUND is actually setting the BACKGROUND_COLOR property.
This appears to be just an RGB triplet (or an index into a color table).
Consequently, "transparent" probably isn't valid, and is just ignored.
As far as I can tell, there isn't a one-shot way to get a transparent
background on new-style plot.

You might, however, export the plot in a format that allows for
transparency, and then use another tool to turn the background color
transparent. I use ImageMagick for this on linux and mac systems.

TTFN,

David