Subject: Re: using plot() function in a batch file
Posted by David Fanning on Tue, 11 Jan 2011 20:51:53 GMT
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David Fanning writes:

> Wow! This just gave me an idea for my Coyote Graphics
> routines. I realized I could add an OUTPUT keyword to
> my routines, which in about 10 lines of code will give
> me the ability to create PostScript, PNG, JPEG, TIFF, etc.
> output files from my routines without drawing anything
> on the display.
>
> I just tried it with FSC_Plot and got a terrific PNG
> file, with beautiful PostScript fonts (not ugly Hershey
> fonts) by typing this command. OUTPUT=2 selects PNG files.
>
>   IDL> fsc_plot, loaddata(1), color='red', axiscolor='blue', output=2
>
> Man, you have GOT to like that! :-)

Alright, now that I've had a cold shower and a chance
to cool off (I could have run outside and run around
in the snow on this frigid, sunny day in Colorado), I
am coming to my senses. :-)

What I accomplished in FSC_PLOT in 10 lines above,
I can really accomplish in three lines at the IDL
command line:

    IDL> PS_Start
    IDL> FSC_Plot, loaddata(1), color='red', axiscolor='blue'
    IDL> PS_End, /PNG

(The extra lines were for the CASE statement, selecting
the different kinds of output plots.)

The problem with putting that *into* FSC_PLOT is that
PS_Start and PS_End have keywords that can control some
of the properties of the output (eg., FILENAME). If I
put the commands into FSC_Plot, I have to have some way
of getting these keywords into FSC_Plot, too. So that's
another 10 or so lines, plus documentation. It was right
about in here that I began to wonder if this was such a
bright idea after all. :-)

I think I'll probably leave things they way they are for
the moment. After the book is out, I plan to turn these

routines into objects anyway (accessed as functions,
the way IDL 8 function graphics are). I guess it probably
makes more sense to leave the extra bells and whistles
alone until then.

Cheers,

David
--
David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")