
Subject: Re: EPS to PDF contour plots

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 02 Apr 2011 14:44:29 GMT

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Matt writes:

> I see that something like this has been posted several times before,
> but I can't seem to find a simple solution...
>
> I'm generating eps contour plots using David Fanning's great new
> routines and the /cell_fill option. However, some of them have the
> well-known 'stripe' effect that is discussed in David's book. My
> question is this: How can I convert these eps files to pdf format
> without the stripes, and without the pdfs files being too large? If I
> use ImageMagick with +antialias, I can only get the fonts to look nice
> if I really crank up the density, which leads to huge pdfs. I'm
> assuming that this is because they are first converted to raster
> images and then to pdf. Is there a way to keep this all in vector
> format? The file size is a problem, because it makes the document
> they are going into huge, and very slow to navigate (and the plots
> don't seem to look great in some viewers).
>
> At the moment I'm just doing the conversion using epstopdf.
>
> I know that this isn't really an IDL question, but if anyone has found
> a solution, it'd be very much appreciated.

You are right that ImageMagick is not the solution here, since it is software for working with raster files, and must go through a raster intermediary to go from one vector format (PostScript) to another (PDF).

I use Adobe Acrobat and Distiller for this purpose, but this is reasonably expensive (although solid and with LOTS of features) software. I see advertisements for less expensive alternatives from time to time. These routines can be called from within IDL using the SPAWN command in exactly the same way ImageMagick is used from within the Coyote Graphics programs.

Another solution I have used is to print PostScript graphics routines directly to a PDF file via the PRINTER device in IDL and a PDF printer.

http://www.idlcoyote.com/fileio_tips/pdffiles.html

This solution is nice and convenient, but it requires the user to directly choose the PDF printer driver. I've

never been able to figure out a way to do this
programmatically.

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
