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Subject: Re: TrueType font caution

Posted by [Kenneth P. Bowman](#) on Fri, 21 Jul 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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In article <397889DB.FC634@ssrl.slac.stanford.edu>, Harvey Rarback  
<rarback@ssrl.slac.stanford.edu> wrote:

- > This reminds me of some more disadvantages I found comparing IDL's TT fonts
- > with hardware fonts on the X device:
- > - Drawing is much slower (about a factor of 4 for Helvetica fonts displayed
- > to an Exceed PC X server)
- > - They look lousier.

I find the TT fonts to be unreadable in a medium-sized X window. I've decided to use Hershey fonts for X display (2D or 3D), PS for printed 2D output, and TT only for printed 3D output. I should have pointed out that the PS files with TT fonts \*print\* fine if all I do is send the file to the printer. The problems occur when I try to edit the graphs in Illustrator.

Ken

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Subject: Re: TrueType font caution

Posted by [noymer](#) on Fri, 21 Jul 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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In article <210720001101137472%k-bowman@null.tamu.edu>,  
"K. Bowman" <k-bowman@null.tamu.edu> wrote:

- > As has been pointed out a few times in this group, the IDL TrueType
- > fonts, unlike PostScript fonts, will plot correctly in 3D plots.

This was one of my gripes in the "top 10" list, in fact.

I \*still\* think RSinc should just add PS support for 3D.

- > character. I don't know how the PS device handles PS fonts, but I
- > expect it leaves the rasterization up to the output device.

Exactly. If you grep a PS file for your axis labels, for instance, you will find that the text is there, as just plain... text.

You point out two reasons why this sucks.

I will re-iterate my [third] reason, and that is that the PS files cannot be run through post-processors such as psfrag (for Tex/LaTeX font substitution) when the fonts are TT.

- > Therefore, my recommendation is that when creating PS files, PS fonts
- > should be used for 2D plots, while TT fonts should be used for 3D
- > plots. This requires some additional (annoying) DEVICE and !P.FONT
- > commands if you make both kinds of plots in the same program.

This is what I am doing from now on, too. But it sucks. PS output should use PS fonts. Period. 3d 2d, whatever.

Sorry to kvetch so much about one thing but come on, if they can support TT in 3d then they can support PS.

- Andrew

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Subject: Re: TrueType font caution  
Posted by [Harvey Rarback](#) on Fri, 21 Jul 2000 07:00:00 GMT  
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"K. Bowman" wrote:

- >
- > The manuals indicate that IDL draws TT fonts by tessellating the font
- > characters and drawing the necessary polygons to create each individual
- > character. I don't know how the PS device handles PS fonts, but I
- > expect it leaves the rasterization up to the output device.
- >
- > From my experience, this has several implications:
- >
- > 1. PS files created using TT fonts are much larger than the same plots
- > using PS fonts, presumably because of all the polygons that must be
- > written. I was unable to combine two plots that use TT fonts (i.e.,
- > two panels for a publication figure) in Illustrator even with 180 MB
- > allotted for Illustrator on my Mac G4. I had no trouble doing the same
- > thing with PS fonts.
- >
- > 2. Because TT text is actually polygons, it cannot be manipulated in a
- > drawing program like Illustrator using the font commands. That is, you
- > can't change the point size, alignment, etc. You can group, scale and
- > move the polygons, but that is less than ideal.

This reminds me of some more disadvantages I found comparing IDL's TT fonts with hardware fonts on the X device:

- Drawing is much slower (about a factor of 4 for Helvetica fonts displayed to an Exceed PC X server)

- They look lousier.  
--Harvey

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