
Subject: MPEG and IDL 5.4

Posted by [Mark Rivers](#) on Wed, 28 Feb 2001 04:11:39 GMT

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I just discovered that IDL 5.4 won't let me run my procedure which generates MPEG files.

I get the error:

```
DL> make_movie, vol, mpeg='b_w_test.mpg'
% LICENSE MANAGER: MPEG feature not licensed for use.
% Error occurred at: MPEG_OPEN      58 U:\RS\IDL54\lib\mpeg_open.pro
%           MAKE_MOVIE      183
U:\Rivers\IDL\Imaging\make_movie.pro
%           $MAIN$
% Execution halted at: MAKE_MOVIE    183
U:\Rivers\IDL\Imaging\make_movie.pro
```

I don't recall seeing anything about this in the newsgroup. I also seem to find it discussed in the Release Notes or on the RSI Web site. The only I see is the entry in the help file for mpeg_open:

Note - MPEG support in IDL requires a special license. For more information, contact your Research Systems sales representative or technical support.

Does this cost \$\$\$? I don't see special licensing for it on their Web page. Why do they do this?

Mark

Subject: Re: MPEG and IDL 5.4

Posted by [nobody](#) on Thu, 01 Mar 2001 19:31:59 GMT

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On Thu, 1 Mar 2001 09:20:10 +1300, Mark Hadfield <m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> wrote:

>

> My favourite delivery format for animations is FLC.

>

> I have written a WWW page with a few notes on the pros & cons of different animation formats. The page is a bit sketchy but if you want to read it, see

>

> <http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield/gust/software/animation/>

>

> ---

> Mark Hadfield

> m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz <http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield>

> National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research

>
>

Hi Mark:

I visited your page, interesting. I've made quite a few scientific animations, using MPEG. You're right, that the playback for MPEG is fixed in the range of 25-30 fps, but many players will allow you to over-ride this. My favorite for windows is VMPEG, which will do this. I use a 24-bit color map, but often could get by with 8-bit. Typical compression in MPEG is around 30:1, so seems it should be good for high-color images. On your page, it seems to indicate that FLC file sizes are more compact, is that right? What is the compression you achieve? What is the native image file format you build your animations with?

MJPEG's also offer good compression, and don't require inter-frame statistics for compression. This is usefull for long, full-screen animations, where making all the frames a priori would require a LOT of disk space. This can be done from IDL by calling a shell-script after generating each frame in IDL, which does the compression and tacs the frame onto your full-length movie. In this way, I generate full-screen SVHS 24bit animations at 30fps and dump them to a video tape. In this way, you could generate your own feature-length film with a 10GB disk :-) ! Maybe this is digressing from the initial thread, but it's one of the few IDL topics I can expound on. I don't use the MPEG routines in IDL, because I don't like the way they seem to go off into never-never land for LONG periods of time and then maybe produce an animation, maybe lock up your system. That was with IDL 5.2, which I upgraded to specifically for the added MPEG routines. I use a freely available MPEG-1 encoder now (Berkley mpeg).

--
Steve S.

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remove CLOTHES before replying
