
Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [Mark Hadfield](#) on Fri, 26 Oct 2001 04:05:21 GMT
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From: "Mark Chan" <markchan@shaw.ca>
> v5.5 comes with a form to request for JPEG and TIFF support.

That's GIF and TIFF, isn't it? JPEG works fine OOTB.

> Questions:
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> 1) Has anyone find out how much the licensing costs?

Not me. I imagine it would depend on what you were going to do with the images. You have to negotiate with Unisys, not RSI, to get the license. I should think that would be a royal pain.

> 2) Is it worth it?

I very much doubt it.

> 3) Better alternative(s) for achieving the same?

PNG for still images. It's widely supported these days and technically superior to GIF.

For animation there are several alternatives that have been discussed on this group. I like FLC, though it's limited to 8-bit colour.

Mark Hadfield
m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz <http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield>
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research

--
Posted from clam.niwa.cri.nz [202.36.29.1]
via Mailgate.ORG Server - <http://www.Mailgate.ORG>

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [nobody@nowhere.com](#) (S) on Fri, 26 Oct 2001 19:20:52 GMT
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On Fri, 26 Oct 2001 04:05:21 +0000 (UTC), Mark Hadfield
<m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> wrote:

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> Not me. I imagine it would depend on what you were going to do with the
> images. You have to negotiate with Unisys, not RSI, to get the license. I
> should think that would be a royal pain.

I emailed the email address at unisys for info on obtaining a license, I
received a two page questionnaire asking me:

LZW Licensing Questionnaire

General information regarding licensing is available on our Website at
<http://www.unisys.com/unisys/lzw>. In order to send you the proper license
agreement, please provide us with the following information:

- 1) What form of LZW you will be using, (i.e., GIF, TIFF, PostScript-2, PDF or a proprietary form of LZW type)?
- 2) On what type of computer will the application be running? E.g., a PC, MAC, workstation, server or web server.
- 3) Describe the primary overall functions of the application(s) you are developing.
- 4) Will the software be a toolkit or other type of software intended for development purposes?
- 5) If you require a Unisys license in order to obtain unlocking of GIF or any other LZW capability in software you obtained from a software vendor (or other third party), please identify this vendor (or third party) and the particular software which needs to be unlocked (include software serial number).
- 6) Is the application(s) for your company or your client company's internal use?
If so, please answer the following questions:
How many computers will run the application?
How many additional computers will have access to the application via a LAN or other network connection?
Describe the company's business and how the application is used in that business.
If the product is being developed for a specific client company, please identify the client company.
- 7) Is the application(s) related to the Internet?
If so, please describe how the application is used, e.g., is it used for implementing an Intranet, or for electronic commerce, or for providing a subscription or free service, or as a billboard for advertising your company's

products/information or another company's products/services.

Will any paid advertisements appear on the site? Will anything be sold on the site?

8) Will the software be sold to end users such as OEMs, VAR's or consumers?

If so, please answer the following questions:

What types of customers will receive the software?

Is it to be sold or distributed to others as part of a software application?

If so, describe the application.

Please list all countries of distribution, and method of distribution, e.g., via the Internet or on a disk.

Please also provide at least a general indication of your pricing and yearly volume.

9) Will the application be bundled with any hardware or other software?

If so, please describe this bundled hardware and/or software.

10) Please provide the name, address, phone and fax numbers, and web site address for your company.

Company Name:

Primary Contact:

Street Address:

City/State/County/Zip:

Phone:

Fax:

Web URL:

Contact e-mail address:

11) Is your organization a governmental entity (e.g. federal, state or city government or agency thereof) or an educational institution (e.g., state or private university)?

12) Is your company a division or subsidiary of another company?

If so, please identify the parent company.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND US ANY INFORMATION WHICH IS CONFIDENTIAL OR PROPRIETARY TO YOUR COMPANY.

I replied with the following:

"Do you have a information about your license requirements/rates? Are they so complex that you must interview (via your questionnaire) license candidates before stating them? I am not a reseller of software. I found the questionnaire a bit ridiculous."

A few hours later I received a phone call from a lawyer! A rather defensive one at that, who seemed to be screaming at me the whole time. His response was, and

this is paraphrased: if you think it's ridiculous, then we can't help you. He did mention something about a \$475 license which I _think_ is for joe blow user who doesn't want to sell anything which has anything to do with LZW, I'm sorry, but between all the screaming, I wasn't able to comfortably ask more specific questions. He did mention that the \$475 was to cover things like the phone call I received. I guess the programmers were paid long ago, the license fees go to lawyers now :^) ! I guess you'll just have to submit the above information and find out what they'll charge, it may be nothing. My impression was to stay away from this company (I mean RUN away!), there has to be better alternatives.

>
>> 2) Is it worth it?

Well, this is a judgement call, isn't it? I guess all these complications come from the history of LZW/GIF, which I don't really know. If LZW/GIF were stolen from Unisys, then I guess I can understand their wanting to seek fair retribution, which may be messy. In that case, I'd say it's worth it to see fairplay triumph. On the other hand, if that is not the case, then it seems there is something shady going on, and I would say it's certainly _not_ worth it and from the point of view of doing the right thing, my conscience would not permit me to aid and abet such behavior. I am therefore very interested in learning a little more about this issue and how it came about. I think to intelligently answer your subjective question, we'd have to consider this.

>
> I very much doubt it.
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>> 3) Better alternative(s) for achieving the same?
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> PNG for still images. It's widely supported these days and technically
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Steve S.

steve@NOSPAMmailaps.org
remove NOSPAM before replying

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [A. D. & J.C. Cool](#) on Sun, 28 Oct 2001 03:18:46 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

"Steve Smith" wrote:

> On Fri, 26 Oct 2001 04:05:21 +0000 (UTC), Mark Hadfield
> <m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> wrote:
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>> images. You have to negotiate with Unisys, not RSI, to get the license. I
>> should think that would be a royal pain.
>

Hi,

Out of interest I approached UNISYS, and requested a licence cost for purely inhouse use at our Government defence facility.

The licence is "free". But there is a USD\$475 cost described as "processing fees."

Nobody at work has felt that distraught at the loss of GIF functionality that they've wanted to support spending that sort of money.

Long Live PNG.

Andrew Cool
Defence Science & Technology Organisation, Edinburgh, Adelaide
SouthAustralia

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [Joseph B. Gurman](#) on Sun, 28 Oct 2001 04:39:05 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

In article <001c01c15dd3\$6b90aa10\$d938a8c0@Hadfield>, "Mark Hadfield"
<m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> wrote:

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Everything people have been saying about PNG and other modern file formats is true (AFAIK), but we have hundreds of pieces of IDL code that write GIF's, and support a library that has hundreds more. some of them are used in server mode to produce hundred of iamges a day that go to our Web sites. Simply doing the global replaces and testing the resulting PNG's would cost us a lot more than \$475, if that's the price for a US governemnt institution (we usually pay higher prices). That of course, doesn't count the incoveneince for users whose Web browsers can handle animated GIFs, but not animated something else.

I'm expecting a fax from Unisys RSN; we submitted the questionnaire a couple of days ago.

Joe Gurman

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [wmconnolley](#) on Sun, 28 Oct 2001 17:14:43 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Joseph B. Gurman <gurman@crosslink.net> wrote:

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> formats is true (AFAIK), but we have hundreds of pieces of IDL code that
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> course, doesn't count the incovenience for users whose Web browsers can
> handle animated GIFs, but not animated something else.

Why don't you just replace the "write_gif" routine with one that uses
write_png, then the ImageMagick routine "convert" to convert the png's
into gifs? You can have the code I use to do this if you like...

-W.

--

William M Connolley | wmc@bas.ac.uk | <http://www.nerc-bas.ac.uk/icd/wmc/>
Climate Modeller, British Antarctic Survey | Disclaimer: I speak for myself
I'm a .signature virus! copy me into your .signature file & help me spread!

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [Mark Hadfield](#) on Sun, 28 Oct 2001 20:26:17 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

From: <wmc@bas.ac.uk>

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> write_png, then the ImageMagick routine "convert" to convert the png's
> into gifs? You can have the code I use to do this if you like...

Good idea, but for the last year or two ImageMagick has not supported LZW
compression out of the box. This is from README.txt:

o --enable-lzw: Unisys reportedly claims a patent on the algorithm
supporting LZW compression (e.g. used by GIF and TIFF). To avoid
possibly infringing on this patent, support for LZW is disabled
by default. With LZW support, GIF files written by ImageMagick
will be much larger than expected.

So if you download the binaries, you will *not* get LZW compression. You can
get it by building from source, or by using an old version, but I guess you
are risking a phone call from Steve Smith's screaming lawyer.

Mark Hadfield
m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz <http://katipo.niwa.cri.nz/~hadfield>
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research

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Posted from clam.niwa.cri.nz [202.36.29.1]
via Mailgate.ORG Server - <http://www.Mailgate.ORG>

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [newt](#) on Sun, 28 Oct 2001 22:28:24 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

"Steve Smith" wrote:

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> received a two page questionnaire asking me:
>
> LZW Licensing Questionnaire
>
> General information regarding licensing is available on our Website at
> <http://www.unisys.com/unisys/lzw>. In order to send you the proper license
> agreement, please provide us with the following information:
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> 1)What form of LZW you will be using, (i.e., GIF, TIFF, PostScript-2, PDF or
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- > Company Name:
- > Primary Contact:
- > Street Address:
- > City/State/County/Zip:
- > Phone:
- > Fax:

> Web URL:

> Contact e-mail address:

>

> 11)Is your organization a governmental entity (e.g. federal, state or city
> government or agency thereof) or an educational institution (e.g., state or
> private university)?

> 12)Is your company a division or subsidiary of another company?

> If so, please identify the parent company.

>

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> YOUR COMPANY.

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> not permit me to aid and abet such behavior. I am therefore very interested in
> learning a little more about this issue and how it came about. I think to
> intelligently answer your subjective question, we'd have to consider this.

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I found an interesting article about the history of the LZW issue, which I thought may be interesting to others:

<http://www.cloanto.com/users/mcb/19950127giflzw.html>

>
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>> I very much doubt it.
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> --
> Steve S.
>
> steve@NOSPAMmailaps.org
> remove NOSPAM before replying

Subject: Re: IDL 5.5 jpeg and tiff
Posted by [wmconnolley](#) on Mon, 29 Oct 2001 16:08:57 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Mark Hadfield <m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> wrote:
> Good idea, but for the last year or two ImageMagick has not supported LZW
> compression out of the box. This is from README.txt:

Interesting. Well, either we have an old version or our system people
can read the README...

-W.

--

William M Connolley | wmc@bas.ac.uk | <http://www.nerc-bas.ac.uk/icd/wmc/>
Climate Modeller, British Antarctic Survey | Disclaimer: I speak for myself
I'm a .signature virus! copy me into your .signature file & help me spread!
