
Subject: Re: gif license

Posted by [Dennis Boccippio](#) on Tue, 30 Oct 2001 01:20:27 GMT

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Thanks for the info, Michael. Haven't heard back from Unisys yet ourselves but was wondering whether the other shoe would drop or not (sounds like it will). I'm assuming your questionnaire responses were of the 'we have no interest in turning a profit off of LZW in IDL' variety?

Has anybody successfully gotten a freebie Unisys agreement?

- Dennis Boccippio, NASA/MSFC SD-60

In article <9rkdp\$8e2\$1@skates.gsfc.nasa.gov>,
"Mike Kaiser" <kaiser@panacea.gsfc.nasa.gov> wrote:

> Being somewhat intrigued by the new gif form on the RSI Web page, I went
> through the motions to fill out the application with Unisys to get a
> gif/tiff license. They sent me a questionnaire which indicated they were
> mostly interested in people who were making money with gif files. I assured
> them we are a government agency and only use gif for Web pages. I then
> received a very official-looking agreement form from the Unisys Office of
> the General Counsel, which I am supposed to sign and send back to them.
> Near the end of this agreement are the words "The above limited license is
> free except for a fee of \$475.00 to cover processing and administrative
> costs. A check for this fee should be returned along with this agreement."
>
> Gee, I wonder what the NASA Chief Council would think of this? Needless to
> say, we won't be using gif from IDL!
>
> --
> Michael L. Kaiser
> NASA/GSFC/Code 695
> Greenbelt, MD 20771
> 301-286-5461 (1683 FAX)
> kaiser@panacea.gsfc.nasa.gov
>
>

Subject: Re: gif license

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Tue, 30 Oct 2001 01:51:58 GMT

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Dennis Boccippio <djboccip@hotmail.com> writes:

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One should also be aware that the original patent held by Unisys,

US4558302: High speed data compression and decompression
apparatus and method

is due to expire in June of 2003. Before one spends a serious amount
of money on the license, one should also look at the time frame.

Craig

--

Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D. EMAIL: craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response

Subject: Re: gif license
Posted by [Dennis Boccippio](#) on Wed, 31 Oct 2001 05:41:02 GMT
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In article <onwv1drj29.fsf@cow.physics.wisc.edu>,
Craig Markwardt <craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu> wrote:

> Dennis Boccippio <djboccip@hotmail.com> writes:
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> of money on the license, one should also look at the time frame.
>
> Craig

Update: we got hit with the \$475 'processing fee' as well (NASA/MSFC for their 'governmental use' agreement) but no other fees. Restrictions include no redistribution of software incorporating LZW functionality, which I read to mean we can't send homegrown IDL code with READ_GIF/WRITE_GIF functionality to our data users. Debating whether or not its worth it... the 6/03 expiration info is helpful...

- DJB

Subject: Re: gif license
Posted by [Stein Vidar Hagfors H\[1\]](#) on Thu, 01 Nov 2001 17:17:40 GMT
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Dennis Boccippio <djboccip@hotmail.com> writes:

> Update: we got hit with the \$475 'processing fee' as well (NASA/MSFC
> for their 'governmental use' agreement) but no other fees.

Shouldn't NASA simply pay up *one time* for the agreement? Sounds like \$475 for an agency-wide agreement is not a huge expense. The paperwork involved in actually getting it done by NASA might cost two orders of magnitude more, however.

> Restrictions
> include no redistribution of software incorporating LZW functionality,
> which I read to mean we can't send homegrown IDL code with
> READ_GIF/WRITE_GIF functionality to our data users.

Of course you can - you're not sending them the LZW functionality, you're just sending programs which rely on that functionality. But your users have to pay the processing fee, or somehow use an IDL version that provides the READ_GIF/WRITE_GIF routines..

> Debating whether or
> not its worth it... the 6/03 expiration info is helpful...

Isn't it.. Also, if you're a user that should pay no money for the license, because you're not making money off LZW, I don't think anyone would get far with an infringement lawsuit (i.e. can they sue you for not paying the processing fee?). However, I'm not a lawyer.. ;-)

--

Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan
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