Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Kenneth P. Bowman on Wed, 21 Apr 2004 03:44:56 GMT

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In article <1Zbhc.1597\$Ua5.1269400@monger.newsread.com>, "David Jackson" <jacksond@dickinson.edu> wrote:

- > Sorry if this has been asked before, but does anyone know how to improve the
- > quality of an mpeg written from IDL's Xinteranimate command. I tried
- > changing mpg_quality and mpg_bitrate but I always got a file that was
- > exactly the same size and quality. I must be doing something silly.

Because MPEG was mainly designed to handle "photographs", I have never liked what it does to scientific graphs (line graphs, in particular). I find that it is better to TVRD each frame and then write the image to a file (I prefer PNGs, but there are other options ... see WRITE_IMAGE). Then use a utility to convert the images to a movie using a codec that is better suited for graphics (e.g, lossless). On the Mac I use GraphicConverter (shareware) with the "Animation" codec. QuickTime Pro will also do the conversion, I believe. QuickTime Pro is available for Windows. Other readers can provide other suggestions.

Ken Bowman

Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Haje Korth on Wed, 21 Apr 2004 16:57:08 GMT

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David.

I quit using the mpeg routines because of the crummy quality. I am pretty happy with the idl2avi.dlm from Ronn Kling and the vp3 codec, which can be downloaded free of charge at http://www.vp3.com. I have been using this solution for a several months and it works great.

Haje

--

"David Jackson" <jacksond@dickinson.edu> wrote in message news:1Zbhc.1597\$Ua5.1269400@monger.newsread.com...

> Hi all.

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- > Sorry if this has been asked before, but does anyone know how to improve the
- > quality of an mpeg written from IDL's Xinteranimate command. I tried
- > changing mpg_quality and mpg_bitrate but I always got a file that was
- > exactly the same size and quality. I must be doing something silly.

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- > Thanks
- > David

>

>

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Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Mark Hadfield on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 02:18:11 GMT

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Haje Korth wrote:

- > I guit using the mpeg routines because of the crummy quality. I am pretty
- > happy with the idl2avi.dlm from Ronn Kling and the vp3 codec, which can be
- > downloaded free of charge at http://www.vp3.com.

By the way, is there an IDL 6.0-compatible version of idl2avi? I looked at http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/dlms/avi.htm and could only find files for versions 5.3 to 5.6.

--

Mark Hadfield "Ka puwaha te tai nei, Hoea tatou" m.hadfield@niwa.co.nz
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)

Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Mark Hadfield on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 02:48:25 GMT

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Mark Hadfield wrote:

- > By the way, is there an IDL 6.0-compatible version of idl2avi? I looked
- > at http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/dlms/avi.htm and could only
- > find files for versions 5.3 to 5.6.

Answering my own question: the IDL 5.6 version seems to work with IDL 6.0.

--

Mark Hadfield "Ka puwaha te tai nei, Hoea tatou" m.hadfield@niwa.co.nz

National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)

Subject: Re: mpeg quality Posted by Yunxiang Zhang on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 06:31:11 GMT

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What's the best choice for Unix/Linux guys?

On Wed, 21 Apr 2004, Haje Korth wrote:

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Subject: Re: mpeg quality
Posted by Miguel Angel Cordoba on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 09:16:00 GMT
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Hi Haje,

>> > >

can you explain where can we find the idl2avi.dlm module and how we can use the vp3 code?

Thanx

--

Miguel �ngel

Haje Korth wrote:

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>

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Miguel Angel Cordoba

mailto:cordoba@grahi.upc.es

Tel. +34 934 017 371 Fax. +34 934 054 194

.....

Grup de Recerca Aplicada en Hidrometeorologia (GRAHI-UPC) http://www.grahi.upc.es

Centre membre de la Xarxa d'Innovacio Tecnologica XIT http://www.cidem.com/xarxait

Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Haje Korth on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 11:44:58 GMT

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Miguel,

idl2avi can be found at http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/dlms/avi.htm. As Mark points out v5.6 works for IDL 6.0, even though I compiled my own version. idl2avi will pop up a window and you can select any Video for Windows compatible codec. There are other ones, but vp3 gave me the best quality/file size ratio. Unlike MPEG it is good for scientific presentation.

Haje

"Miguel Angel Cordoba" <cordoba_nospam@grahi.upc.es> wrote in message news:40878D50.4070901@grahi.upc.es...

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 Miguel Angel Cordoba
                          mailto:cordoba@grahi.upc.es
                     Tel. +34 934 017 371
                      Fax. +34 934 054 194
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Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Haje Korth on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 11:49:25 GMT

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Mark,

I actually compiled my own version from the source code. I sent the binary to Ronn Kling for posting on his web site. Unfortunately, he has not gotten around to post it. I would offer it on my web server, but I do not want to take credit for something that I have not created.

Haje

"Mark Hadfield" <m.hadfield@niwa.co.nz> wrote in message news:c67a16\$ppv\$1@newsreader.mailgate.org...

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- > at http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/dlms/avi.htm and could only
- > find files for versions 5.3 to 5.6.

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- > Mark Hadfield
- "Ka puwaha te tai nei, Hoea tatou"
- > m.hadfield@niwa.co.nz
- > National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)

Subject: Re: mpeg quality

Posted by Mark Hadfield on Thu, 22 Apr 2004 21:49:16 GMT

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Yunxiang Zhang wrote:

- > On Wed, 21 Apr 2004, Haje Korth wrote:
- >> I guit using the mpeg routines because of the crummy quality. I am pretty
- >> happy with the idl2avi.dlm from Ronn Kling and the vp3 codec, which can be
- >> downloaded free of charge at http://www.vp3.com. I have been using this
- >> solution for a several months and it works great.
- > What's the best choice for Unix/Linux guys?

For many purposes, the FLIC format, which was designed some time ago by Autodesk as a format for CAD animations. The big limitation with FLIC is that it supports only 8-bit colour. If you can live with that, I think it's your best bet.

You can generate FLIC files with a command-line program, ppm2fli, and view them on Unix with Xanim.

I have an HTML page that talks about different animation formats & shows examples. It's normal home is hidden behind the NIWA firewall, but for a limited time only you can see it at

ftp://ftp.niwa.co.nz/incoming/m.hadfield/animation/index.htm I

The discussion is a bit disorganised and does not take full account of all the valuable info that Rick Towler has posted to the IDL newsgroup over the years (though I do mention this). Also, the page suffers a bit from being uprooted & transplanted in a new location, but it may give you some useful info. Please be sparing when viewing the animation files for the second example: they're big!

--

Mark Hadfield "Ka puwaha te tai nei, Hoea tatou" m.hadfield@niwa.co.nz
National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)

Subject: Re: mpeg quality
Posted by DPJ on Sat, 24 Apr 2004 23:18:42 GMT
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Thanks Haje...it looks like this will work.

David

"Haje Korth" <haje.korth@jhuapl.edu> wrote in message news:c68b7q\$aus\$1@aplcore.jhuapl.edu...

- > Miguel,
- > idl2avi can be found at

http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/dlms/avi.htm.

- > As Mark points out v5.6 works for IDL 6.0, even though I compiled my own
- > version. idl2avi will pop up a window and you can select any Video for
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- > "Miguel Angel Cordoba" <cordoba_nospam@grahi.upc.es> wrote in message
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Subject: Re: mpeg quality
Posted by Rick Towler on Mon, 26 Apr 2004 17:47:11 GMT
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This may be obvious but remember that in order to play back an animation created with vp3 the user needs the vp3 codec installed. If your animations are intended for a limited audience which you have some control over you're usually fine. But if you are making these available to a wide audience then you're in for a bit of a headache.

Not that there is much you can do to limit the pain though. The only codecs that are shipped with most every OS are the Radius Cinepack codec and some version of the MPEG-1 codec. Both are poor codecs for scientific animation so there is no universal solution.

If you are going to be presenting your animations find out well ahead of

time if you can use your own laptop. Most seminars/conferences I attend these days seem to strongly encourage all speakers to use a single laptop to cut down on laptop/projector "issues". I don't know if this is a trend... (Physicists insert joke about how biologists can't use computers here.) Using custom codecs in this scenario takes extra effort.

-Rick

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"DPJ" <dpjackson@yahoo.com> wrote in message
news:mBCic.331$g31.234@newsread2.news.atl.earthlink.net...
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