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Subject: Re: IDL generates PS file that prints slow  
Posted by [ryba](#) on Mon, 19 Dec 1994 16:51:43 GMT

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In article <1994Dec18.175308.15356@Princeton.EDU>, xu@bessel.Princeton.EDU (Guohong Xu) writes:

```
> I am frustrated with IDL because it generates PostScript files that
> prints out very slow. Are there anybody having the same experience?
>     x = randomu(s, 20000)
>     y = randomu(s, 20000)
>     PLOT, x, y, PSYM=1
> This script will generate a PS file of about 200KB, but it will take
> more than 30 minutes to print it out in a Sparc Printer. Normally,
> the Sparc printer will take only 2 minutes to print out a file of 200 KB.
>
> Can any one tell me what could be the problem? Could it be that IDL
> generates low efficiency PostScript files?
```

Actually, I'd say IDL generates fairly HIGH efficiency PS code...you just plotted 20,000 little plusses. By high efficiency, I mean I've seen plotting software PS drivers that would generate a 1MB file for a similar plot. Either way, such a plot will take a while to print, since vector graphics are a lot more complicated than simple text files. Now, there is maybe one efficiency that could be done...all these routines generate plot symbols by collections of lines (if you look at the IDL driver code, you'll see what I mean). It is conceivable to have PSYM first generate a PostScript symbol and then place it in multiple locations. There's no guarantee that it will be any faster on your typical PS printer (and especially no guarantee for NEWSprint). I guess if you defined some kind of font and downloaded it you could get it to work, but coding the driver software would be non-trivial.

--

Dr. Marty Ryba | Generation X:  
MIT Lincoln Laboratory | Too young to be cynical,  
ryba@ll.mit.edu | too old to be optimistic.

Of course nothing I say here is official policy, and Laboratory affiliation is for identification purposes only, blah, blah, blah....

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Subject: Re: IDL generates PS file that prints slow  
Posted by [senechal](#) on Mon, 19 Dec 1994 23:28:30 GMT

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In article <1994Dec18.175308.15356@Princeton.EDU> xu@bessel.Princeton.EDU (Guohong Xu) writes:

```
> Dear IDL-programmers,
```

>  
> I am frustrated with IDL because it generates PostScript files that  
> prints out very slow. Are there anybody having the same experience?  
>  
> A very simple code to test this problem:  
>     set\_plot, 'ps'  
>     x = randomu(s, 20000)  
>     y = randomu(s, 20000)  
>     PLOT, x, y, PSYM=1  
>     device, /close  
>     spawn, 'lpr idl.ps'  
> This script will generate a PS file of about 200KB, but it will take  
> more than 30 minutes to print it out in a Sparc Printer. Normally,  
> the Sparc printer will take only 2 minutes to print out a file of 200 KB.  
>  
> Can any one tell me what could be the problem? Could it be that IDL  
> generates low efficiency PostScript files?  
>  
> Thanks a lot, and Merry Christmas!  
>  
>     Guohong Xu  
>  
> ----- Dept of Astrophysics, Princeton University -----  
>

I just tried this test on a SparcPrinter running from a Sparc 2 workstation.  
The PS file was 958KB and took under 2 minutes to print.

--  
---- Keith           (senechal@monstro.aero.org -- x64504)  
--

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Subject: Re: IDL generates PS file that prints slow  
Posted by [gurman](#) on Tue, 20 Dec 1994 19:18:24 GMT  
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In article <3d54uu\$5i6@news2.aero.org>, senechal@sylvester.aero.org  
("Keith Senechal") wrote:

> In article <1994Dec18.175308.15356@Princeton.EDU>  
> xu@bessel.Princeton.EDU (Guohong Xu) writes:  
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>> ----- Dept of Astrophysics, Princeton University -----
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> The PS file was 958KB and took under 2 minutes to print.
> --
> ---- Keith (senechal@monstro.aero.org -- x64504)
> --
```

For what it's worth, I tried the same thing on an Alpha printing to an HP 4SiMX over ethernet. It took < 1 m 9 s to print the 980 Kbyte file.

Joe Gurman

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--
J.B. Gurman / Solar Physics Branch/ NASA Goddard Space Flight Center/
Greenbelt MD 20771 USA / gurman@uvsp.gsfc.nasa.gov
| Federal employees are still prohibited from holding opinions while|
| at work. Therefore, any opinions expressed herein are somebody |
| else's. |
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