
Subject: Re: Getting nice printed output
Posted by [davidf](#) on Fri, 14 Nov 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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Alright, I was having a bad day when I wrote this:

> I got a brand new printer today, having been thinking for
> awhile that my printer problems were related to my extremely
> reliable, but hopelessly outdated Apple Personal Laserwriter.
>
> This one has 36 MBytes of RAM, and is fast, fast, fast.
>
> Imagine my surprise, then, when I tried to print out a simple
> little object graphics program as the first "test case".
> I waited for about 5 minutes before windows started to shut
> down, my virtual memory was overflowing, and I started getting
> cryptic error messages from IDL. I finally had to leave to
> go get the kids. I never did get anything out of the damn
> printer.
>
> Frankly, I've just about given up on the PRINTER device. :-(

Just about the time I hit the SEND button on that message
I remembered that I had to download a new PostScript driver
for the printer. Wanting to be fair, I thought I would give
the PRINTER device another chance to impress me.

Well...

I used my XPlot program, which is just a simple line plot.
After I hit the Print button I waited 53 seconds with the
Dialog_Printer dialog staring at me. I waited another
2:39 for something to come out of my fast printer. But,
it did come out with no virtual memory overflow or any
other error messages. The PRINTER device is doing something
right.

The output...well, the annotations are nice. :-) But the
page used half my toner to get the gray background color
and the plot and axes lines have disappeared. The lesson
for the day: forget all that fancy graphics stuff and draw
black on white if you are sending stuff to the PRINTER device.
I'll bet it would have looked great if I had been able to
convince my wife to let me get that color PostScript printer
I wanted. :-)

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: Getting nice printed output
Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Fri, 14 Nov 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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Joseph Scott Stuart wrote:

> I have an IDL 5 program that uses polyline objects to draw orbits of
> bodies in the solar system. Typically, I have a dozen or so objects,
> and each one has 120 vertices. This produces great output on the
> screen, but I'm having quite a bit of trouble getting decent printed
> copy. I can use IDLgrWindow::Read() and write_jpeg to get mediocre
> output, but I'd like to do better. When I use an IDLgrPrinter object
> and produce postscript output, the resulting ps file is about 15 megs.
> The printers and programs like powerpoint die trying to do anything
> with it. Any ideas?

I don't know a darn thing about object graphics, but in direct graphics
you could try creating a large pixmap window (say 2000x2000 pixels),
drawing your graphic elements in the pixmap, and saving it as a GIF/JPEG.

Or else you could wait for IDL 5.0.3 (any day now) which might fix the
large Postscript file problem.

Cheers,
Liam.

Subject: Re: Getting nice printed output
Posted by [Simon Moore](#) on Mon, 17 Nov 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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David Fanning wrote in message ...

[snip]

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>> little object graphics program as the first "test case".
>> I waited for about 5 minutes before windows started to shut
>> down, my virtual memory was overflowing, and I started getting

>> cryptic error messages from IDL. I finally had to leave to
>> go get the kids. I never did get anything out of the damn
>> printer.
>>
>> Frankly, I've just about given up on the PRINTER device. :-(
[snip]

Hmmm, well you're not the only one having printing problems using object
graphics:

I've tried both a HP4+ (default NT driver) and HP5 (HP's own driver) under
both NT4.0 SP2 & SP3, using both IDL5.0 & 5.02.
I have never yet succeeded in getting PCL output from any combination of the
above - I tend to give up when IDL has grabbed 80Mb of virtual memory and my
system has stopped responding to user input. I can (just) get Postscript
output, so long as I use Dialog_PrinterSetup, not Dialog_PrintJob.

I did once send a bug report to FPS (RSI's UK arm) and the gist of the reply
was "Interesting, but we've never had any problem" ...

[snip]
> The output...well, the annotations are nice. :-) But the
> page used half my toner to get the gray background color
> and the plot and axes lines have disappeared. The lesson
> for the day: forget all that fancy graphics stuff and draw
> black on white if you are sending stuff to the PRINTER device.
> I'll bet it would have looked great if I had been able to
> convince my wife to let me get that color PostScript printer
> I wanted. :-)
[snip]

I'd say the problem seems to be with line thicknesses - the plot lines and
axes do seem to be there, just VERY thin.
Sometimes there is no option but to use colour - and IDL's colour PS (at
least pre-object graphics) is very good.

Simon
