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Subject: Re: Is there a worthy printing utility  
Posted by [davidf](#) on Sat, 14 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT  
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Richard D. Hunt (rdhunt@sandia.gov) writes:

> Does anyone have printing utility that will work under IDL for MS  
> windows and UNIX? I am trying to print something as simple as an  
> 8-bit graphics image and I have played with Dialog\_Printer\* but  
> they are too limiting and don't work well with object or direct  
> graphics.

I had great hopes for the PRINTER device when I first heard about it. But I, too, have been frustrated by it. And especially with the way it handles images. (My images typically are printed as tiny half-inch squares in the bottom corner of the page.) I have discovered no way to combine images with other types of graphical output, like I can with the PS device.

What I would really like is a Print File item under the File menu button in the IDE that would allow me to select ANY file in my directory and send it to the default printer. This would give me control over formatting PostScript output as I like (via the PS device) and it would provide an easy way to get the output sent to a printer.

By the way, I just recently learned that to print a PostScript file on my Windows NT machine all I have to do is drag its icon onto my Printer icon. This starts up GhostView on my machine because this is the application associated with \*.ps files in my registry and gives me the printer setup dialog. I simply select the "PostScript File" option and off it goes. Quite nice. This could easily be automated by spawning the "Send To" command.

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: Is there a worthy printing utility  
Posted by [davidf](#) on Sun, 15 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT  
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Peter Mason ([peterm@demsysd.syd.dem.CSIRO.AU](mailto:peterm@demsysd.syd.dem.CSIRO.AU)) writes:

> While I'm at it, let me tell you about some other hybrid routines I have that  
> are also on the cutting edge of uselessness.

I'm going to have a new page on my web site devoted to those programs that sounded-like-a-good-idea-when-I-thought-of-them. They would probably be a lot more instructive than some of the programs already available. I have a couple of dozen such programs lying around here. :-)

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

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Subject: Re: Is there a worthy printing utility  
Posted by [Peter Mason](#) on Mon, 16 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT  
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On Sat, 14 Mar 1998, David Fanning wrote:

<...>

> What I would really like is a Print File item under the  
> File menu button in the IDE that would allow me to select ANY  
> file in my directory and send it to the default printer.  
> This would give me control over formatting PostScript output  
> as I like (via the PS device) and it would provide an easy  
> way to get the output sent to a printer.

I have some code that will let you send a "print file" (a postscript or PCL file or something like that) directly to a (compatible) Windows printer, under program control. It sticks up a list of the available Windows printers and sends the file straight to the one you select. It's in a mixture of C and IDL.

I wrote it to replace the strictly-Win3.1x "DEVICE,PRINT\_FILE=" function in IDL 4, really, and expected that it would not be needed in IDL 5. If anyone is interested in it, then let me know and I'll make it available. (It's not

entirely standalone at the moment.)

While I'm at it, let me tell you about some other hybrid routines I have that are also on the cutting edge of uselessness.

There's one that is passed a draw-window ID or draw widget value and sticks the graphic onto the clipboard (like the IDL4 menu-option does, but without needing a mouse click), and another that sticks a 2D array of numbers onto the clipboard in "Text" format. (With IDL4 it can also copy the array as a "Csv" - handy for pasting into Excel - but the sleight of hand I use to do this crashes IDL 5.) L(e)ast of all, there's one that returns a STRARR giving the drives attached (phys. and net.) to your PC. (Drive letters only.) Again, let me know if you're interested.

Peter Mason

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