
Subject: Printing to postscript

Posted by [Jon Marchant](#) on Tue, 17 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT

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Hi - I'm a bit new to IDL and would like some advice on printing greyscale filled contour plots so that they can be imported into Microsoft Word. The plots are drawn using the 'B-W Linear' colour table on the unix version of IDL 4.

I've currently got IDL to print encapsulated postscript files, but when printed out the colour (grey) range isn't as large as it should be, i.e. it goes from black to medium grey instead of black to white. I've checked the data and the code, the full range of the colour table should definitely be in the graphs, and indeed is apparent when the same plot is sent to the screen. Does anyone have any idea what's going wrong?

Also, as these are quite large arrays I'm printing, the eps files are huge (2MB plus); is there no alternative to eps for importing graphs into word?

Thanks in advance

--

Jon Marchant, Unit For Space Sciences & Astrophysics,
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Subject: Re: Printing to postscript

Posted by [davidf](#) on Tue, 17 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT

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Jon Marchant (jmm@ukc.ac.uk) writes:

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> printing greyscale filled contour plots so that they can
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> sent to the screen. Does anyone have any idea what's going
> wrong?

You need to set the Bits_Per_Pixel keyword on the Device command to 8, after you do a Set_Plot to PS. It is 4 by default, for only 16 shades of grey. For other tips on PostScript printing, see my web page and the articles on how to produce Perfect PostScript Output.

> Also, as these are quite large arrays I'm printing, the eps
> files are huge (2MB plus); is there no alternative to eps
> for importing graphs into word?

There are alternatives, but none give you the nice, crisp letters and sharp lines that make you want to use PostScript in the first place. One alternative is to not use filled contours (I think it is all those polygons that is making your file so big), but rather display the data as an image with the contours on top of it. This is a little more difficult to do in a PostScript file than it is on the display, but if you can find someone with a copy of my book, you can see how it is done on page 96.

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: Printing to postscript
Posted by [Jon Marchant](#) on Mon, 23 Mar 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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William Connolley wrote:

[snip]

> suggestion: when plotting to the screen, you often have only, say, 170 colours
> available; so colour indices 0...169 are (say) black to white. If you switch to
> ps, you have 256 colours available, so 0...169 no longer span the full range.

That did the trick! Thanks :)

--

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