
Subject: a possible replacement for cw_animate and xinteranimate

Posted by [philip aldis](#) on Fri, 30 Oct 1998 08:00:00 GMT

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Hi ,

I put a message on the news group a couple of weeks ago about doing composite animations - animations which have more than one thing going on - the original message explains the problem. I received two suggestions, but neither was really what I wanted. David Fanning suggested displaying the images for each frame, i.e. don't use pixmaps, but this was not fast enough and Liam Gumley's frames programs weren't entirely what I wanted. So I wrote my own animation routines. As I wrote it, I tried to make it very general and the finished product, I think, would probably be quite useful to people.

The program has a widget based front end which to all intents and purposes looks very much like the front end of xinteranimate. I don't know how xinteranimate is written - I couldn't understand the code - but I've written my version using the timer keyword so the program spends little time in the event loop. The widget program, though, has no idea what it is drawing - it is totally general. The widget program is calling object methods - and it is this which means you can have a great deal of control in creating users defined animations. I won't bother going into specifics, but I'll just give you the benefits I can envisage.

- * In the objects you define elements in the animation, such as an animation of a ctscan, a second animation of the heart, some axes, a colour bar etc. You then determine whether these elements are fixed - the axes, the colour bar, or moving - the two animations. For each element you must also define its position in the frame. The standard object then does the rest really.
- * Because I am not saving the entire window, and am allocating pixmaps for each element and then using the positions in the device, `copy=` to recreate the frames, any black space is not taking up memory, also fixed items only have one pixmap - there is only one colour bar.
- * Essentially you could create the object to do anything, and I think that this is probably the greatest benefit - that you, the programmer have complete control. You can even add to the front end for specific animations, if the user wanted to enter more information

The program is not yet ready - it works and all the points I have described are in place, but there is currently no error checking and the front end needs a few alterations, like messages to tell you what it is doing etc.. - but I would really appreciate it if people commented. If you think that this program could be of use to you then I would be very

grateful if you could e-mail me direct or post a reply on the news group, with perhaps suggestions of features you might like to see, and what you might use it for.

At the moment the program only reads in ascii text but it will soon be able to read in byte images as well. With ascii text the program automatically works the image sizes, but is there any way of doing this with byte data, because with ascii text the data is presented like the array with carriage returns at the end of each row and space separators between each frame, but I am not sure about byte images. Again, if anyone can help, that would be great.

I've tried to explain the program as best I can, I hope it's not too garbled..thanks in advance for any replies I get.

cheers,
Phil Aldis
