

Class 35: More Efficient Pixel Maps

Held: Friday, 4 April 2008

Summary: We continue our exploration of pixel maps by considering ways to make the representation of images smaller.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Lab: Pixmaps, Revisited.
- Reading: Pixmaps, Revisited: Encoding Data More Efficiently.
- Due: Quiz 7.

Notes:

- Start-of-class time for discussion of campus topics continues.
- Our goal today is to finish Wednesday's lab and to start on a followup lab.
- No additional reading for Monday: We will continue working on the second lab on Monday.
- Assignment 8 is now ready. We'll talk about it during the introduction to today's material.

Overview:

- Review.
- Storing data more efficiently.
- Tradeoffs.

Short Review

- The current task: Write procedures that store and restore images in files.
- The current strategy: *pixel maps*: We store the color for each pixel in the image, in sequence.
- Criteria for assessing a particular implementation of pixel maps:
 - File size
 - Cost of saving/restoring
 - Clarity of code
 - Human readability
 - ...
- We've explored representations of colors:
 - The string that names the color
 - A human-readable integer
 - A human-readable triplet of integers
- Can we do better?

Compressing Colors

- Human readable integers require between 2 (0 + space or carriage return) and about a dozen characters per color.
- Human readable RGB triples require between 6 (digit space digit space digit return) and 12 (3digits space 3digits space 3digits return) characters per color.
- Can we do better?
- If we're willing to use `char->integer`, we can get by with *one* character per component.
- That's the subject of the new lab.

Other Techniques

- We can also save space by finding ways to write less than one color per pixel.
- How?
- Write rectangular regions of the same color, rather than pixels.
- Simplified: Write sequences of the same color.
- That's the subject of the new assignment.

Labs

- Finish the first lab on pixel maps
- Begin the second lab on pixel maps
- Plan to continue work on the second lab on Monday.

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