

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS Mailit 7

The Independent JPEG Group's JPEG software

<http://www.ijg.org>

README for release 6b of 27-Mar-1998

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This distribution contains the sixth public release of the Independent JPEG Group's free JPEG software. You are welcome to redistribute this software and to use it for any purpose, subject to the conditions under LEGAL ISSUES, below.

Serious users of this software (particularly those incorporating it into larger programs) should contact IJG at jpeg-info@uunet.uu.net to be added to our electronic mailing list. Mailing list members are notified of updates and have a chance to participate in technical discussions, etc.

This software is the work of Tom Lane, Philip Gladstone, Jim Boucher, Lee Crocker, Julian Minguillon, Luis Ortiz, George Phillips, Davide Rossi, Guido Vollbeding, Ge' Weijers, and other members of the Independent JPEG Group.

IJG is not affiliated with the official ISO JPEG standards committee.

OVERVIEW

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This package contains C software to implement JPEG image compression and decompression. JPEG (pronounced "jay-peg") is a standardized compression method for full-color and gray-scale images. JPEG is intended for compressing "real-world" scenes; line drawings, cartoons and other non-realistic images are not its strong suit. JPEG is lossy, meaning that the output image is not exactly identical to the input image. Hence you must not use JPEG if you have to have identical output bits. However, on typical photographic images, very good compression levels can be obtained with no visible change, and remarkably high compression levels are possible if you can tolerate a low-quality image. For more details, see the references, or just experiment with various compression settings.

This software implements JPEG baseline, extended-sequential, and progressive compression processes. Provision is made for supporting all variants of these processes, although some uncommon parameter settings aren't implemented yet. For legal reasons, we are not distributing code for the arithmetic coding variants of JPEG; see LEGAL ISSUES. We have made no provision for supporting the hierarchical or lossless processes defined in the standard.

We provide a set of library routines for reading and writing JPEG image files, plus two sample applications "cjpeg" and "djpeg", which use the library to perform conversion between JPEG and some other popular

image file formats. The library is intended to be reused in other applications.

In order to support file conversion and viewing software, we have included considerable functionality beyond the bare JPEG coding/decoding capability; for example, the color quantization modules are not strictly part of JPEG decoding, but they are essential for output to colormapped file formats or colormapped displays. These extra functions can be compiled out of the library if not required for a particular application. We have also included "jpegtran", a utility for lossless transcoding between different JPEG processes, and "rdjpgcom" and "wrjpgcom", two simple applications for inserting and extracting textual comments in JFIF files.

The emphasis in designing this software has been on achieving portability and flexibility, while also making it fast enough to be useful. In particular, the software is not intended to be read as a tutorial on JPEG. (See the REFERENCES section for introductory material.) Rather, it is intended to be reliable, portable, industrial-strength code. We do not claim to have achieved that goal in every aspect of the software, but we strive for it.

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It appears that the arithmetic coding option of the JPEG spec is covered by patents owned by IBM, AT&T, and Mitsubishi. Hence arithmetic coding cannot legally be used without obtaining one or more licenses. For this reason, support for arithmetic coding has been removed from the free JPEG software. (Since arithmetic coding provides only a marginal gain over the unpatented Huffman mode, it is unlikely that very many implementations will support it.) So far as we are aware, there are no patent restrictions on the remaining code.

The IJG distribution formerly included code to read and write GIF files. To avoid entanglement with the Unisys LZW patent, GIF reading support has been removed altogether, and the GIF writer has been simplified to produce “uncompressed GIFs”. This technique does not use the LZW algorithm; the resulting GIF files are larger than usual, but are readable by all standard GIF decoders.

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