

WarpPNG

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	<i>TITLE :</i> WarpPNG		
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NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

Contents

1	WarpPNG	1
1.1	WarpPNG.datatype 44.3	1
1.2	Description	1
1.3	System Requirements	1
1.4	Installation	2
1.5	Speed	2
1.6	Distribution Conditions	4
1.7	Disclaimer	4
1.8	Acknowledgements	4
1.9	About the author	5
1.10	Future	5
1.11	Program History	5

Chapter 1

WarpPNG

1.1 WarpPNG.datatype 44.3

WarpPNG.datatype 44.3 - the fastest 24-bit PNG picture datatype!
(for WarpUp PPC systems only)

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Description	what is this datatype for?
System requirements	what you need to use this software
Installation	installing this software
Speed	information regarding speed issues
Distribution	distribution conditions
Disclaimer	important notices
Acknowledgements	thankyous and credits
About the author	how to contact the author
Future	improvements I intend to make
History	program history

1.2 Description

As you've probably guessed, WarpPNG.datatype is a yet another PNG datatype. The difference is that this is for owners of PPC cards, and it has been targetted specifically at WarpUp (not PowerUp). Even better, it is compact, clean, free and well behaved - a true plug'n'play PPC datatype.

I decided to write this datatype because no other decent WarpOS native PNG datatype exists for the PPC, and it is was relatively easy to implement being based on the same engine that WarpJPEG.datatype uses.

1.3 System Requirements

368x463 24-bit,	279896 bytes	0.38	0.65	1.61	1.02	
251x400 24-bit,	136856 bytes	0.25	0.46	0.97	0.59	
718x425 grey,	157890 bytes	0.27	0.53	1.27	0.71	
718x425 grey int,	182522 bytes	0.38	0.75	3.33	1.39	
1024x768 256 col,	324599 bytes	0.43	0.76	1.62	0.93	
779x767 256 col,	404245 bytes	0.42	0.77	1.96	0.95	
473x639 256 col,	163397 bytes	0.24	0.49	0.98	0.49	
368x463 256 col,	115942 bytes	0.16	0.31	0.64	0.33	
251x400 256 col,	57056 bytes	0.11	0.38	0.46	0.20	
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+						
(int = interlaced image)						

These figures are provided for comparison purposes only, but they speak for themselves... WarpPNG is at least 50% faster than the native WarpOS version of akPNG in most cases (80-300% faster with palette based and/or smaller files), and around 3 times faster than 68k datatypes on a 060 (the speed difference will be even greater on 040 systems with a fast PPC). All this and no loss in image quality!

All tests were performed, multiple times, using Visage, with the following command line: "visage test.png nopng time test".

Still too slow!

Despite these facts, I'm still disappointed with the relatively slow performance advantage offered by my 603e over my 060 (approximately only 3 times faster). The main problem is that PPC datatypes still have to use the 68k for reading the data from disk and for creating / writing to the bitmap time lost for file i/o is negligible as WarpPNG uses double buffered asynchronous i/o (supports DMA controllers).

The largest bottleneck is that the DTM_WRITEPIXELARRAY method of the picture.datatype has to be used to write the image data from WarpPNG into the image bitmap. As this process is done via picture.datatype, it can only currently be performed by the 68k. To give you some idea of how much of a problem this is for WarpPNG, typically, half of the overall decode time is used by the PPC to decode the whole image, and the other half is used by DTM_WRITEPIXELARRAY on the 68k. And that's on a graphics card - the time used by DTM_WRITEPIXELARRAY will probably be even greater on systems using native Amiga graphics. It doesn't take a genius to see that this is slowing the datatype down, and is the main reason why WarpPNG will still be faster on a 060 than a 040.

How to make the datatype faster

Is there anything that can be done about this? Well, yes, there are a few patches that you can install which should make things faster:

- NewWPA8 (util/boot/NewWPA8.lha on Aminet) should provide a notable speed increase on native Amiga graphics - probably won't make any difference if you use a graphics card.
- If you use a graphics card and CyberGraphX, you may want to make sure you are using the supplied v43 picture.datatype, as this will be faster than the P96 and OS3.5 picture.datatype on your system.

Of course, any other general speed-up patches should help too.

1.6 Distribution Conditions

WarpPNG.datatype is public domain with the copyright remaining with the author and may be freely distributed legally providing:

- (1) None of the distributed files are changed in any way
- (2) It is not sold for profit and it is not included on any disks that are sold solely for profit (includes magazine coverdisks)
- (3) The distribution contents remain complete (see list below)

If this software is to be sold for profit, permission must be obtained from me, the author.

Aminet, Amiga Format and Amigactive have been granted permission to distribute WarpPNG.datatype on their CDs.

The following files must be present in their original and unchanged form in any copies of this software:

```
Classes/Datatypes/WarpPNG.datatype
Devs/Datatypes/PNG
Devs/Datatypes/PNG.info
WarpPNG.guide
WarpPNGG.guide.info
Install_WarpPNG
Install_WarpPNG.info
```

1.7 Disclaimer

This software is provided "as is", without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, statutory or otherwise. By using the archive and its contents, you accept the entire risk as to its quality and performance.

Neither Oliver Roberts nor any other party involved in the creation, production or delivery of the archive and its contents shall be liable for any direct, indirect, special, consequential or incidental damages, including without limitation damages for loss of profits, loss of use or loss of anticipated costs, expenses or damages, and any data or information which may be lost or rendered inaccurate, even if Oliver Roberts is advised of the possibility of such damages.

Do not attempt to tamper with the supplied files. Doing so will cause problems and you may find things start going wrong!

1.8 Acknowledgements

PNG support provided by the libpng link library by the PNG Development Group, and the zlib link library by Jean-loup Gailly and Mark Adler (both compiled for WarpOS, of course).

It was made possible by VBCC, which was used to build and compile the datatype. Thanks to Volker Barthelmann and the other authors involved.

Thanks also to Sam Jordan for WarpOS and helping me out with various queries regarding it.

Finally, thanks to the OS 3.5 development team - now everyone has access to a 24-bit picture.datatype, I don't need to bother messing about adding dithering routines :)

1.9 About the author

If you have any problems with this software, or if you have any suggestions/queries, please contact me and I will do my best to sort any bugs out as soon as possible:

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1.10 Future

Some things that may appear in the future:

- If I can squeeze any more speed out of the datatype, I'll do so :)

If you have any other suggestions, please let me know.

Future releases of WarpPNG.datatype will be available from either Aminet (util/dtype/WarpPNGdt.lha) or its webpage:

<http://www.nanunanu.org/~oliver/warppng.html>

1.11 Program History

44.3 (22.1.2000)

- Fixed possible deadlock case (caused everything to freeze/lock-up) which usually only occurred when lots of images were being decoded simultaneously.

44.2 (9.1.2000)

- When the OS3.5 picture.datatype is in use, dithering is now switched off (only) if the image is to be rendered to a hi/true colour screen,
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resulting in much higher performance, with negligible quality loss.

- Dispatcher now performs some extra functions, which should quash possible stability problems.
- Corrected akPNG WarpUp benchmarks.

44.1 (3.1.2000)

- Initial release.