

INTRODUCTION

The success of the TGA™ File Format for storing color images can be attributed to its ease of use, the small amount of program memory needed to parse the file, and the fact that it was the first true-color file format widely available. Truevision® defined the TGA file format in 1984 for use with its first videographics products. Since then, it has been estimated that today over 80 percent of the color images stored on hard drives employ some variation of the TGA file format. Many government offices, corporations, service bureaus, production shops and nearly all Truevision developers have standardized on the TGA format as a means of allowing cross-product and cross-application compatibility. Truevision recommends that this format be used by all software developed for Truevision products since it allows customers flexibility in combining many applications together to provide a total solution to meet their needs.

The original Truevision TGA File Format has been widely accepted by the graphics industry. However, newer technology and techniques have created the need for additional image information to be recorded in the file. In 1989, Truevision introduced extensions to the TGA File Format to satisfy requests made by the graphics industry and to ensure that the standard will meet future needs of the color imaging marketplace. The extensions are optional and will have no impact on existing packages (assuming the packages followed the original TGA File Format guidelines). In particular, the new TGA File Format addresses the following needs:

- * The inclusion of a scaled-down “postage stamp” copy of the image
- * Date and Time of image file creation
- * Author Name
- * Author Comments
- * Job Name
- * Job Accumulated Time
- * Gamma Value
- * Correct Color LUT
- * Pixel Aspect Ratio
- * Scan Line Offset Table
- * Key Color
- * Software Package Name and Version Number
- * Developer Definable Areas
- * Attribute (Alpha) channel Type
- * The ability for simple expansion