

BigText

Reference Manual

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This document describes BigText version 1.3
and was prepared 20 May 2012.

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NAME

Bigtext – print big text using X11 fonts

DESCRIPTION

The *BigText* program is used to print big text banners using X11 fonts.

A long time ago, when text terminals were the norm, and graphical desktops were the pipe-dreams of wealthy R&D labs, there were programs to print big banners on chunky, noisy, ascii line printers.

```

#####      ##
#####      ##      #####
##   ###          ##   ##   ##
##   ##          #   ##   #
##   ##          ##
##   ##   ###   #####   ##   ###   ##   ##   #####
##   ###   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##
#####   ##   ##   ##   ##   #   ##   ##   ##   ##
##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ###   ##
##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   #####   ###   ##
##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   ##   #   ##   ##   ##
##   ###   ##   #   #   ##   ###   #   ##   #####   ##   #
#####   ###   #####   #####   #####   ##   ##   ##
          ##   ###
          ##   ##
          ###   ##
          #####

```

I wrote BigText because I wanted to put "warning" in big fancy letters in one of my source files. And all the banner programs I could find were too big, or too small, or too ugly.

With *BigText* all you have to do is use *xlsfonts(1)* or *xfontsel(1)* to choose a font, and then run *bigtext(1)* to get any banner text you want.

ARCHIVE SITE

The latest version of *BigText* is available on the Web from:

```

URL:    http://bigtext.sourceforge.net/
File:   bigtext.html           # the bigtext page
File:   bigtext-1.3.README    # Description, from the tar file
File:   bigtext-1.3.lsm       # Description, LSM format
File:   bigtext-1.3.spec      # RedHat package specification
File:   bigtext-1.3.tar.gz    # the complete source
File:   bigtext-1.3.pdf       # Reference Manual

```

This Web page also contains a few other pieces of software written by me. Please have a look if you are interested.

BUILDING BIGTEXT

Full instructions for building *BigText* may be found in the *BUILDING* file included in this distribution.

It is also possible to build *BigText* on Windows using the Cygwin (www.cygwin.com) or DJGPP (www.delorie.com/djgpp) environments. Instructions are in the *BUILDING* file, including how to get native Windows binaries.

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BigText version 1.3

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AUTHOR

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RELEASE NOTES

This section details the various features and bug fixes of the various releases. For excruciating and complete detail, and also credits for those of you who have generously sent me suggestions and bug reports, see the *etc/CHANGES.** files.

Version 1.3 (2012-May-19)

- Bigtext now uses the libexplain error reporting library.

Version 1.2 (2010-Sep-19)

- The download page on the web site now includes a link to the LaunchPad PPA, for installing pre-build packages if you are using Ubuntu Linux.
- The license has been updated to GNU GPL version 3.
- There is a new output mode, to allow generating UCSD p-System font files, called `SYSTEM.CHARSET`.
- There is a new *bigtext -s* command line option, used to specify that each characters is to be composed of pixels which are itself, rather than the default hash character.

Version 1.1 (2004-Nov-02)

- There are two internal fonts ("fixed" and "variable") so BigText can be used without XFS being available.
- There is a `-rotate` option so that long or wide text can be written down the page.
- There is a `-list` option which lists the available fonts.

NAME

How to build Bigtext

SPACE REQUIREMENTS

You will need about 3MB to unpack and build the *bigtext* package. Your milage may vary.

BEFORE YOU START

There are a few pieces of software you may want to fetch and install before you proceed with your installation of bigtext.

GNU Groff

The documentation for the *bigtext* package was prepared using the GNU Groff package (version 1.14 or later). This distribution includes full documentation, which may be processed into PostScript or DVI files at install time – if GNU Groff has been installed.

GCC

You may also want to consider fetching and installing the GNU C Compiler if you have not done so already. This is not essential. Bigtext was developed using the GNU C++ compiler, and the GNU C++ libraries.

The GNU FTP archives may be found at `ftp.gnu.org`, and are mirrored around the world.

SITE CONFIGURATION

The **Bigtext** package is configured using the *configure* program included in this distribution.

The *configure* shell script attempts to guess correct values for various system-dependent variables used during compilation, and creates the *Makefile* and *lib/config.h* files. It also creates a shell script *config.status* that you can run in the future to recreate the current configuration.

Normally, you just *cd* to the directory containing *Bigtext*'s source code and then type

```
% ./configure
...lots of output...
%
```

If you're using *csh* on an old version of System V, you might need to type

```
% sh configure
...lots of output...
%
```

instead to prevent *csh* from trying to execute *configure* itself.

Running *configure* takes a minute or two. While it is running, it prints some messages that tell what it is doing. If you don't want to see the messages, run *configure* using the quiet option; for example,

```
% ./configure --quiet
%
```

To compile the *Bigtext* package in a different directory from the one containing the source code, you must use a version of *make* that supports the *VPATH* variable, such as *GNU make*. Change directory to the directory where you want the object files and executables to go and run the *configure* script. The *configure* script automatically checks for the source code in the directory that *configure* is in and in *..* (the parent directory). If for some reason *configure* is not in the source code directory that you are configuring, then it will report that it can't find the source code. In that case, run the *configure* script with the option `--srcdir=DIR`, where *DIR* is the directory that contains the source code.

By default, *configure* will arrange for the *make install* command to install the *igtext package's files in /usr/local/bin, and /usr/local/man. There are options which allow you to control the placement of these files.*

`--prefix=PATH`

This specifies the path prefix to be used in the installation. Defaults to */usr/local* unless otherwise specified.

`--exec-prefix=PATH`

You can specify separate installation prefixes for architecture-specific files files. Defaults to */\${prefix}* unless otherwise specified.

`--bindir=PATH`

This directory contains executable programs. On a network, this directory may be shared between machines with identical hardware and operating systems; it may be mounted read-only. Defaults to `${exec_prefix}/bin` unless otherwise specified.

`--mandir=PATH`

This directory contains the on-line manual entries. On a network, this directory may be shared between all machines; it may be mounted read-only. Defaults to `${prefix}/man` unless otherwise specified.

The `configure` script ignores most other arguments that you give it; use the `--help` option for a complete list.

On systems that require unusual options for compilation or linking that the *Bigtext* package's `configure` script does not know about, you can give `configure` initial values for variables by setting them in the environment. In Bourne-compatible shells, you can do that on the command line like this:

```
$ CXX='g++ -traditional' LIBS=-lposix ./configure
...lots of output...
$
```

Here are the `make` variables that you might want to override with environment variables when running `configure`.

Variable: CXX

C++ compiler program. The default is `c++`.

Variable: CPPFLAGS

Preprocessor flags, commonly defines and include search paths. Defaults to empty. It is common to use `CPPFLAGS=-I/usr/local/include` to access other installed packages.

Variable: INSTALL

Program to use to install files. The default is `install` if you have it, `cp` otherwise.

Variable: LIBS

Libraries to link with, in the form `-lfoo -lbar`. The `configure` script will append to this, rather than replace it. It is common to use `LIBS=-L/usr/local/lib` to access other installed packages.

If you need to do unusual things to compile the package, the author encourages you to figure out how `configure` could check whether to do them, and mail diffs or instructions to the author so that they can be included in the next release.

BUILDING BIGTEXT

All you should need to do is use the

```
% make
...lots of output...
%
```

command and wait. When this finishes you should see a directory called `bin` containing one file: `bigtext`.

`bigtext` The `bigtext` program is used to draw banners using X11 font data. For more information, see `bigtext(1)`.

If you have GNU Groff installed, the build will also create a `etc/reference.ps` file. This contains the README file, this BUILDING file, and all of the man pages.

You can remove the program binaries and object files from the source directory by using the

```
% make clean
...lots of output...
%
```

command. To remove all of the above files, and also remove the `Makefile` and `include/config.h` and `config.status` files, use the

```
% make distclean
...lots of output...
```

```
%
command.
```

The file *etc/configure.in* is used to create *configure* by a GNU program called *autoconf*. You only need to know this if you want to regenerate *configure* using a newer version of *autoconf*.

TESTING BIGTEXT

The *bigtext* package comes with a test suite. To run this test suite, use the command

```
% make sure
...lots of output...
Passed All Tests
%
```

The tests take a few seconds each, with a few very fast, and a couple very slow, but it varies greatly depending on your CPU.

If all went well, the message

```
Passed All Tests
```

should appear at the end of the make.

INSTALLING BIGTEXT

As explained in the "*SITE CONFIGURATION*" section, above, the *bigtext* package is installed under the */usr/local* tree by default. Use the `--prefix=PATH` option to *configure* if you want some other path. More specific installation locations are assignable, use the `--help` option to *configure* for details.

All that is required to install the *bigtext* package is to use the

```
% make install
...lots of output...
%
```

command. Control of the directories used may be found in the first few lines of the *Makefile* file and the other files written by the *configure* script; it is best to reconfigure using the *configure* script, rather than attempting to do this by hand.

GETTING HELP

If you need assistance with the *bigtext* package, please do not hesitate to contact the author at

```
Peter Miller <pmiller@opensource.org.au>
```

Any and all feedback is welcome.

When reporting problems, please include the version number given by the

```
% bigtext -version
bigtext version 1.3.D002
...warranty disclaimer..
%
```

command. Please do not send this example; run the program for the exact version number.

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bigtext version 1.3

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```

NAME

bigtext – print big text using X11 fonts

SYNOPSIS

bigtext [*option...*] [**-font** *name*] *string...*

bigtext -List

bigtext -VERSion

DESCRIPTION

The *bigtext* program is used to print big text using X11 fonts. It is vary similar to the many other *banner*(1) programs, except that it is able to use any fonts being served by the X11 Font Server.

If you embed a newline in the next, multiple lines of big text will be printed. The newline uses the size of the current font setting, so undesired things can happen if you previously used a larger font on the same line.

OPTIONS

The following options are understood:

-Font *name*

Set the font you want to be used. This uses the X11 font naming conventions, so it includes the typeface, the style and the size. This option may be specified more than once, and affects how all following strings are drawn. For this reason, it must be the last option specified. Defaults to *variable* if not set; this is a default X11 font.

-Help

Provide some help with using the *bigtext* program.

-List This option may be used to list the names of the available fonts. This is equivalent to the *xlsfonts*(1) command.

-Rotate This option may be used to cause the text to be written down the page, rather than across the page. This is useful for long messages or large text sizes.

-VERSion

Print the version of the *bigtext* program being executed.

-Apple_Pascal

This option may be used to generate text suitable for use with Apple Pascal as the `SYSTEM.CHARSET` file.

All other options will produce a diagnostic error.

All options may be abbreviated; the abbreviation is documented as the upper case letters, all lower case letters and underscores (`_`) are optional. You must use consecutive sequences of optional letters.

All options are case insensitive, you may type them in upper case or lower case or a combination of both, case is not important.

For example: the arguments `"-help"`, `"-HEL"` and `"-h"` are all interpreted to mean the **-Help** option. The argument `"-hlp"` will not be understood, because consecutive optional characters were not supplied.

Options and other command line arguments may be mixed arbitrarily on the command line.

The GNU long option names are understood. Since all option names for *bigtext* are long, this means ignoring the extra leading `'-'`. The `"--option=value"` convention is also understood.

ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES**FONTSERVER**

Set this to the name of the X11 font server you want to be used as a font source.

EXIT STATUS

The *bigtext* command will exit with a status of 1 on any error. The *bigtext* command will only exit with a status of 0 if there are no errors.

EXAMPLE

What follows is a very brief example of how to use the *bigtext(1)* command:

```
$ bigtext BigText
#####  ##          #####          ##
##  ##          ##          ##
##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
#####  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
#####  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##  ##
##
##  ##
#####
```

\$

This text uses the default *variable* font.

SEE ALSO

xlsfonts(1)

server font list displayer for X

xfonstsel(1)

point and click selection of X11 font names

xfs(1)

X font server

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Version 3, 29 June 2007

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