NAME

msgfmt – create a message object from a message file

SYNOPSIS

msgfmt [**–v**] [**–o** *output-file*] *filename***.po** . . .

AVAILABILITY

SUNWloc

DESCRIPTION

msgfmt creates message object files from portable object files (*filename***.po**), without changing the portable object files.

The **.po** file contains messages displayed to users by system commands or by application programs. **.po** files can be edited, and the messages in them can be rewritten in any language supported by the system.

The **xgettext**(1) command can be used to create **.po** files from script or programs.

Portable Object Files

Formats for all **.po** files are the same. Each **.po** file contains one or more lines, with each line containing either a comment or a statement. Comments start the line with a hash mark (#) and end with the newline character. All comments are ignored. The format of a statement is:

directive value

Each directive starts at the beginning of the line and is separated from *value* by white space (such as one or more space or tab characters). *value* consists of one or more quoted strings separated by white space. Use any of the following types of directives:

domain *domainname*
msgid *message_identifier*
msgstr *message_string*

The behavior of the **domain** directive is affected by the options used. See OPTIONS for the behavior when the –**o** option is specified. If the –**o** option is not specified, the behavior of the **domain** directive is as follows:

- All *msgids* from the beginning of each **.po** file to the first domain directive are put into a default message object file, **messages.mo**.
- When **msgfmt** encounters a **domain** *domainname* directive in the **.po** file, all following *msgids* until the next **domain** directive are put into the message object file *domainname***.mo**.
- Duplicate *msgids* are defined in the scope of each domain. That is, a *msgid* is considered a duplicate only if the identical *msgid* exists in the same domain.
- All duplicate *msgids* are ignored.

The **msgid** directive specifies the value of a message identifier associated with the directive that follows it. The *message_identifier* string identifies a target string to be used at retrieval time. Each statement containing a **msgid** directive must be followed by a statement containing a **msgstr** directive.

The **msgstr** directive specifies the target string associated with the *message_identifier* string declared in the immediately preceding **msgid** directive.

Message strings can contain the escape sequences **\n** for newline, **\t** for tab, **\v** for vertical tab, **\b** for backspace, **\r** for carriage return, **\f** for formfeed, **** for backslash, \" for double quote, **\ddd** for octal bit pattern, and **\xDD** for hexadecimal bit pattern.

OPTIONS

–v Verbose. List duplicate message identifiers. Message strings are not redefined.

–o *output-file* Specify output file name as *output-file*. All **domain** directives and duplicate *msgids* in the **.po** file are ignored.

EXAMPLES

In this example **module1.po** and **module2.po** are portable message objects files.

```
example% cat module1.po
# default domain "messages.mo"
msgid  "msg 1"
msgstr "msg 1 translation"
#
domain "help_domain"
msgid  "help 2"
msgstr "help 2 translation"
#
domain "error_domain"
msgid  "error 3"
msgstr "error 3 translation"

example% cat module2.po
# default domain "messages.mo"
msgid  "mesg 4"
msgstr "mesg 4 translation"
#
domain "error_domain"
msgid  "error 5"
msgstr "error 5 translation"
#
domain "window_domain"
msgid  "window 6"
msgstr "window 6 translation"
```

The following command will produce the output files, **messages.mo**, **help_domain.mo**, and **error_domain.mo**.

```
example% msgfmt module1.po
```

The following command will produce the output files, **messages.mo**, **help_domain.mo**, **error_domain.mo**, and **window_domain.mo**.

```
example% msgfmt module1.po module2.po
```

The following example will produce the output file **hello.mo**.

```
example% msgfmt –o hello.mo module1.po module2.po
```

Install message object files in **/usr/lib/locale/***locale***/LC_MESSAGES/***domain***.mo** where *locale* is the message locale as set by **setlocale**(3C), and *domain* is text domain as set by **textdomain( )**. The **/usr/lib/locale** portion can optionally be changed by calling **bindtextdomain( )**. See **gettext**(3I).

SEE ALSO

xgettext(1), **gettext**(3I)

NOTES

Neither **msgfmt** nor any **gettext**(3I) routine imposes a limit on the total length of a message. However, each line in the ***.po** file is limited to **MAX_INPUT** (512) bytes.

Installing message catalogs under the C locale is pointless, since they are ignored for the sake of efficiency.