NAME

loadfont – display or change font information in the RAM of the video card on an x86 system in text mode

SYNOPSIS

loadfont [–**f** *BDF_file* | –**c** *codeset*] [–**m** *mode*] [–**d**]

AVAILABILITY

x86

SUNWcsu

DESCRIPTION

The **loadfont** utility allows a user to load and activate a different font into the RAM of the video card used by the console of the Solaris for x86 operating system in text mode. It can also be used to display information about the fonts currently in use. In addition, the –**m** option can be used to change the size of the characters on the screen; it can also be used to change the number of lines per screen. **loadfont** will always read from standard output; this will allow a system administrator to use it from a remote terminal.

When used without arguments, **loadfont** displays the different ways the command can be used, as shown in the synopsis.

Options

–**f** *BDF_file*
: This command reads the contents of *BDF_file* and subsequently loads the font specified in the file into the RAM of the video card. The file must be in the Binary Distribution Format version 2.1 as developed by Adobe Systems, Inc. (See **loadfont**(4).)

–**c** *codeset*
: *codeset* is the name of a codeset available for the current font size. This font will be loaded into the RAM of the video card and activated. Use **?** to find out the valid *codesets* available. This option is a shorthand form of –**f**.

–**m** *mode*
: This option will attempt to change the mode of the console as specified. This will result in having a different font size and/or different number of lines and columns on the screen. Use **?** to find out the valid *modes* available.

–**d**
: This *read*s the font information from the video RAM and *write*s it to standard output in a format compatible with the Binary Distribution Format version 2.1 as developed by Adobe Systems, Inc. (See **loadfont**(4).)

Fonts

A font is the representation of characters by images. The need to use different fonts can be imposed by:

1. The codeset used to represent the characters internally.
2. The resolution used to display the characters.

Each font contains exactly 256 images. All supported fonts are fixed size (constant width and constant height), i.e., each character takes the same amount of space on the screen. When the monitor is not being used in graphics mode, the **loadfont** utility allows a user to modify the font used by the video card, so different images are displayed on the screen of the console for the various characters. The same video card may support different text modes. Video cards typically differ by the number of pixels they use to represent a single character. On any given video card, the same number of pixels is used for each character. For the standard VGA video cards, 8 by 16 (8 horizontally and 16 vertically) resolution is supported:

When **loadfont** is invoked to modify the existing font, it will attempt to do so for the font size currently in use. Use the −**m** option to switch to another font size.

loadfont and pcmapkeys

There is an almost one-to-one relationship between the use of the **loadfont** utility and the **pcmapkeys** utility. Whereas **loadfont** is used to list or modify the images that correspond with the various characters, the **pcmapkeys** utility is used to determine how characters are generated from the keyboard and which code (a single byte code) will be used to represent the character internally. The default representation is the ISO 8859-1 codeset.

When a different codeset is used, both a different **pcmapkeys** input file and a different font set are required. If the default font does not satisfy your needs (because a different font size or a customized font is required, e.g., a Greek font), a **loadfont** description file to be used with the −**f** option is needed. A sample file that describes the IBM extended ASCII font for an 8 by 16 resolution is supplied (**437.bdf**). A second sample file, **646g.bdf**, contains a font file for German ASCII. See **pcmapkeys**(1) and **loadfont**(4) for additional details.

FILES

/usr/share/lib/fonts/8859-1.bdf	the Binary Distribution Format (BDF) file for the default fonts
/usr/share/lib/fonts/437.bdf	sample Binary Distribution Format (BDF) file for IBM 437 font on a VGA
/usr/share/lib/fonts/646g.bdf	sample BDF file for German ASCII

SEE ALSO

pcmapkeys(1), **loadfont**(4)

WARNINGS

When an attempt is made to switch to a mode that the video card does not support, you will get a blank screen. There is nothing wrong with the system; as super-user, simply type in the command to set the mode back, e.g.:

loadfont −**m V80x25**

NOTES

The default fonts on the system are those of the ISO 8859-1 codeset. The optional IBM DOS 437 codeset is supported *only* at internationalization level 1. That is, if you choose to download fonts of the optional IBM DOS 437 codeset, there will be no support for non-standard U.S. date, time, currency, numbers, unit, and collation. There will be no support for non-English message and text presentation, and no multi-byte character support. Therefore, non-Windows users should only use IBM DOS 437 codeset in the default C locale.