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GNU FreeFont

The GNU FreeFont project aims to provide a useful set of free scalable

(i.e., OpenType) fonts covering as much as possible of the ISO 10646/Unicode

UCS (Universal Character Set).

Statement of Purpose

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The practical reason for putting glyphs together in a single font face is

to conveniently mix symbols and characters from different writing systems,

without having to switch fonts.

Coverage

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FreeFont covers the following character sets

\* ISO 8859 parts 1-15

\* CEN MES-3 European Unicode Subset

http://www.evertype.com/standards/iso10646/pdf/cwa13873.pdf

\* IBM/Microsoft code pages 437, 850, 852, 1250, 1252 and more

\* Microsoft/Adobe Windows Glyph List 4 (WGL4)

http://www.microsoft.com/typography/otspec/WGL4.htm

\* KOI8-R and KOI8-RU

\* DEC VT100 graphics symbols

\* International Phonetic Alphabet

\* Arabic, Hebrew, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopian and Thai alphabets,

including Arabic presentation forms A/B

\* mathematical symbols, including the whole TeX repertoire of symbols

\* APL symbols

etc.

Editing

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The free outline font editor, George Williams's FontForge

<http://fontforge.sourceforge.net/> is used for editing the fonts.

Design Issues

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Which font shapes should be made? Historical style terms like Renaissance

or Baroque letterforms cannot be applied beyond Latin/Cyrillic/Greek

scripts to any greater extent than Kufi or Nashki can be applied beyond

Arabic script; "italic" is really only meaningful for Latin letters.

However, most modern writing systems have typographic formulations for

contrasting uniform and modulated character stroke widths, and have some

history with "oblique", faces. Since the advent of the typewriter, most

have developed a typographic style with uniform-width characters.

Accordingly, the FreeFont family has one monospaced - FreeMono - and two

proportional faces (one with uniform stroke - FreeSans - and one with

modulated stroke - FreeSerif).

To make text from different writing systems look good side-by-side, each

FreeFont face is meant to contain characters of similar style and weight.

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Files and their suffixes

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The files with .sfd (Spline Font Database) are in FontForge's native format.

Please use these if you plan to modify the font files.

TrueType fonts for immediate consumption are the files with the .ttf

(TrueType Font) suffix. These are ready to use in Xwindows based

systems using FreeType, on Mac OS, and on older Windows systems.

OpenType fonts (with suffix .otf) are for use in Windows Vista.

Note that although they can be installed on Linux, but many applications

in Linux still don't support them.

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Free UCS scalable fonts: http://savannah.gnu.org/projects/freefont/

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