

Re: C++: why 80 characters??

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/C/ CPP/comp.lang.cpp/2004-04/0164.html>

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On Thu, 01 Apr 2004 09:36:28 -0600, John Doe <johndoe@nowhere.com> wrote:

>I write code as long as 250+ columns sometimes (when the code refers to
>a single concept), and I don't understand why people complain about
>that. Just use the word wrap, right?

I guess if the result of your editor's word-wrapping algorithm is acceptable to you, party down. Will that also be the case, though, with everyone who may ever need to view your code?

>
>People who write 80 columns force everybody else in the world to see
>their code in a narrow stripe of screen, when almost every programmer
>nowdays has 1280x1024+ screen resolution. Many have 1600+!

For me, to be able to fit more than about 130 characters on my (1400-pixel-wide) screen would require reducing the font size to something my 45-year-old eyes would not enjoy trying to read (I get enough headaches as it is, thank you very much). Not to mention the fact that I may want to fit another window next to my editor while editing (or at least be able to see some portion of it)

>
>If the algorithm does not fit into one screen, you are going to make
>mistakes when writing or reading it. Losing 2/3 of the screen to stay
>into 80 characters seems nonsense to me.

Bah. If the algorithm doesn't fit on one (modern-length) screen, it's too complicated (or uses trivial constructs like lots of switch cases).

What about printing? Are you pleased with the results of trying to print your file with the 250+ columns? I guess you can customize some sort of a print utility (like the ZLPR program I give away on my site) to do intelligent things with those long lines, but I think sometime, somewhere, someone is likely to curse you for them.

-leor

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