Xfig – Installation & Start-up Guide

by Ekawat ("Ice") Homsirikamol
ver. 1.0
Sep. 25, 2010

1. Brief Introduction

Xfig is one of the most popular vector-based drawing programs. It can be quite easily used to draw block diagrams of digital systems. The program is fairly easy to use (with some learning curve) and it supports easy export of drawings to various formats.

2. Installation

By default, Xfig runs on xserver. Installing Xfig and xserver can be done as follows:

<u>Windows</u>

Refer to
> http://x.cygwin.com/docs/ug/setup-cygwin-x-installing.html

Method 1 : Cygwin

Follow the instructions provided at the website, except of the following steps:
Step 13: recommended servers are the servers from Virginia Tech (*.vt.edu) or Georgia Tech (*.gatech.edu)
Step 15: On top of following current instructions, search for the "xfig" package and include it in the installation. This can be done by typing "xfig" in the search box. Check all boxes that apply.
Note : The package listing in step 15 is different in the new version of cygwin but the same steps are still applicable.

Method 2 : Cygwin + Xming Xserver

First, install Xfig.
Perform the same steps as in Method 1, with the following exception: In step 15, install only "xfig" package and none of the other packages required for X11.

Second, install Xming
Install Xming and Xming-fonts from
> http://www.straightrunning.com/XmingNotes/
Instructions on how to do it are at the website.

Mac

Please refer to

Linux

Install xfig from yum by entering
```
sudo yum install xfig
```

3. Running Xfig

Windows:

The basic steps used to start Xfig are shown below:

1. Start X server
2. Start an X server terminal
3. type
```
xfig &
```

Method 1
Starting X server can be done by typing
```
startxwin
```
in the cygwin terminal.
An icon indicating that X server is running should appear as an X mark in the notification area of your desktop.

Right click at the X icon and select terminal if no new terminal is created after `startxwin` command.

Method 2
Start X server by opening Xming program.
Open cygwin and enter
```
export DISPLAY=127.0.0.1:0
```
Then, start xfig by typing
```
xfig &
```

Linux / Mac:

Typing
```
xfig &
```
in the terminal should be enough.

4. Using Xfig

A good tutorial about using Xfig can be found here:
http://users.skynet.be/hugocoolens/linux/xfig-howto.pdf

5. Xfig Library

The library creation in Xfig can be done as follows:

1. Create a text file specifying a path to your library.

For instance, if you are using the cygwin terminal to run Xfig and your library is stored in
`C:\gmu\ece545\components`,
create a file containing the following path :
`/cygdrive/c/gmu/ece545/components`
Then, save it as
`lib_dir.txt`
Path navigation in Linux and Mac can be done as normal.

Adding more path to the text file will make your library larger.

2. Call xfig with a special option:
Assuming that you saved your file as `lib_dir.txt`, your program call should be
`xfig -library_dir lib_dir.txt &`

Note that the default library will be excluded from your library unless it is included in the text file.