

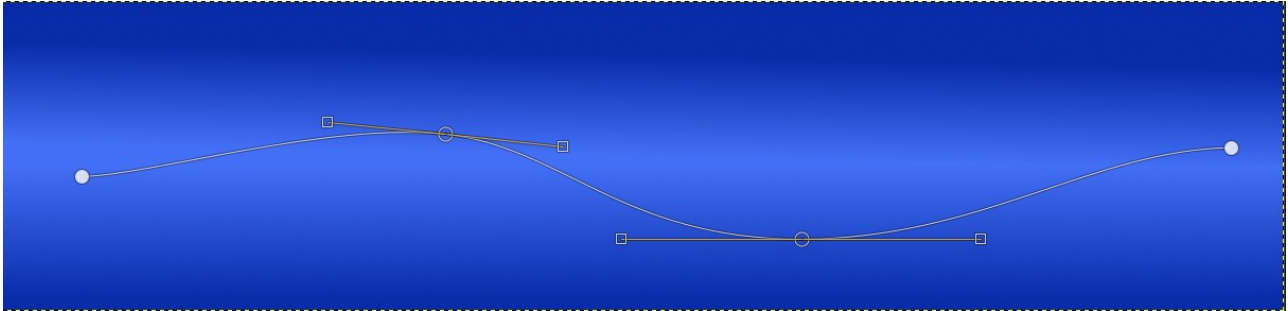
Using Custom Font Tools to Create Expanding Text

This animation style uses character spacing to create the illusion of the text expanding from the left.

Add a new image to Gimp (2000x400 px).

File>>New... (Ctrl + N)

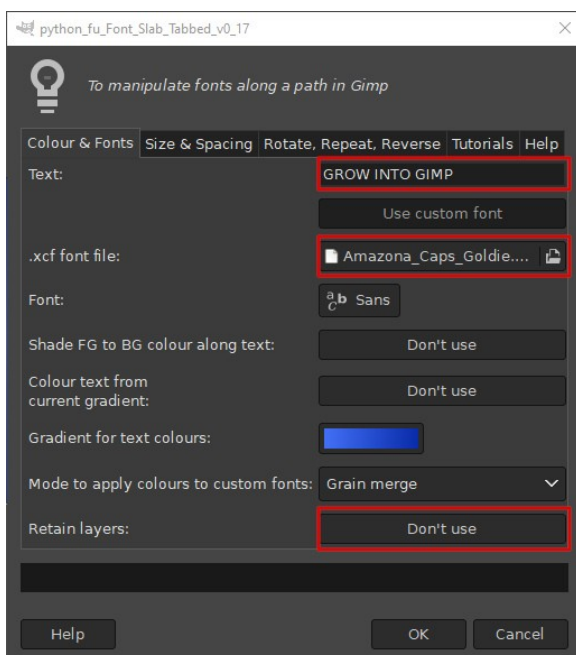
Create a suitable background and add a path for the letters to move along (I used a curving path).



Call up the FontSlab plug-in:

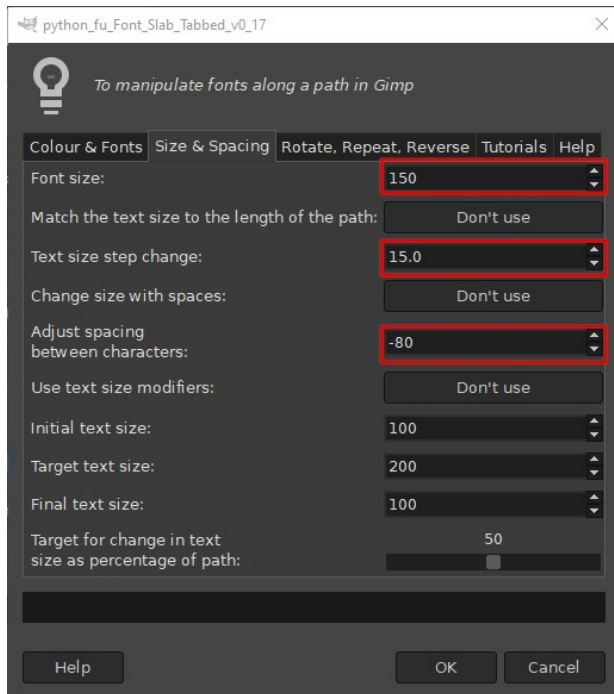
Filters>>Custom Fonts>>Using Tools>>Font Slab Tabbed v0.17...

Use the first tab to select the custom font (you could use a normal font) to use and enter your text. The 'Retain layers:' option should be set to 'Don't use'.

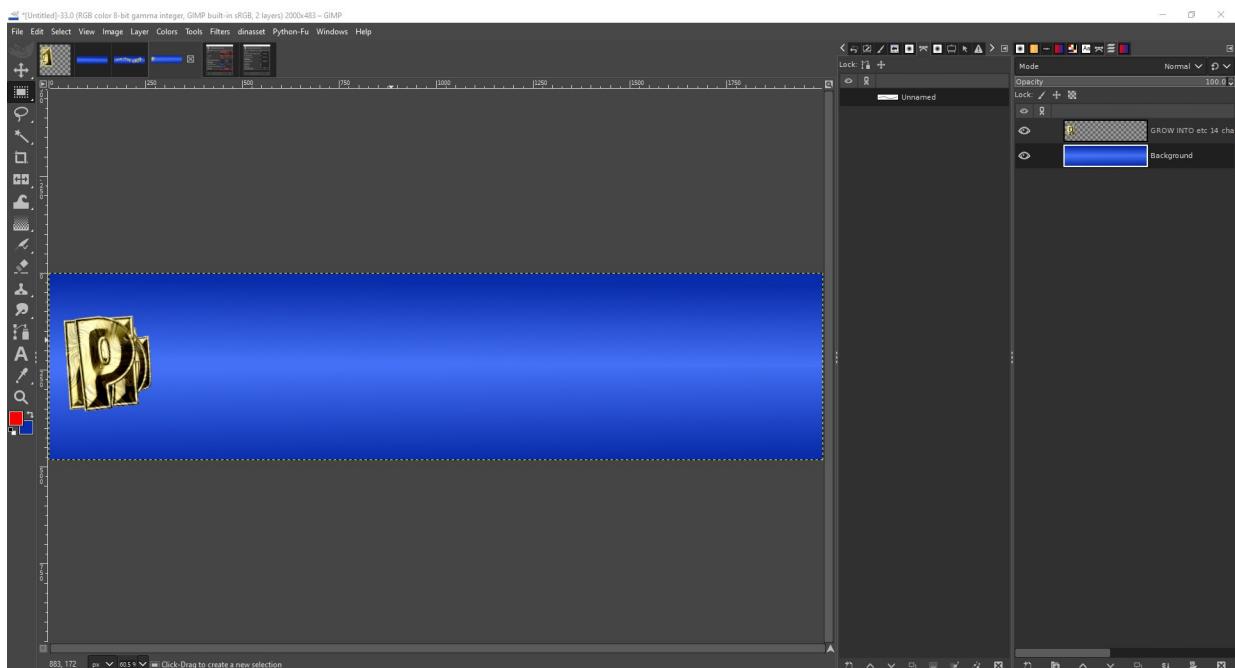


Use the second tab to set the initial font size and the size step change. You will probably need to adjust these values to accommodate the length of the path and the custom font you use.

The 'Adjust spacing between characters' option needs to be set to a negative value to give the impression that the characters are initially stacked up on the left hand side of the image. You will need to play about to find the value that gives you a satisfactory outcome: I settled on -80.



Click on 'OK'.

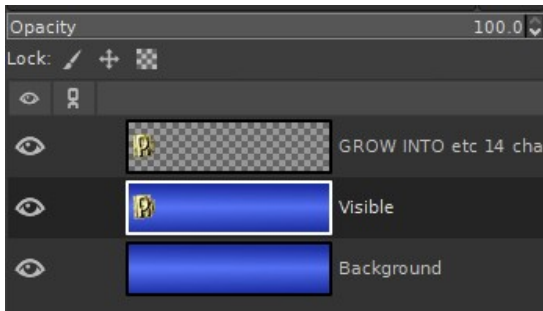


Now it is a matter of repeating the plug-in with smaller amounts of negative spacing using the 'Adjust spacing between characters' option until you reach 0 (zero).

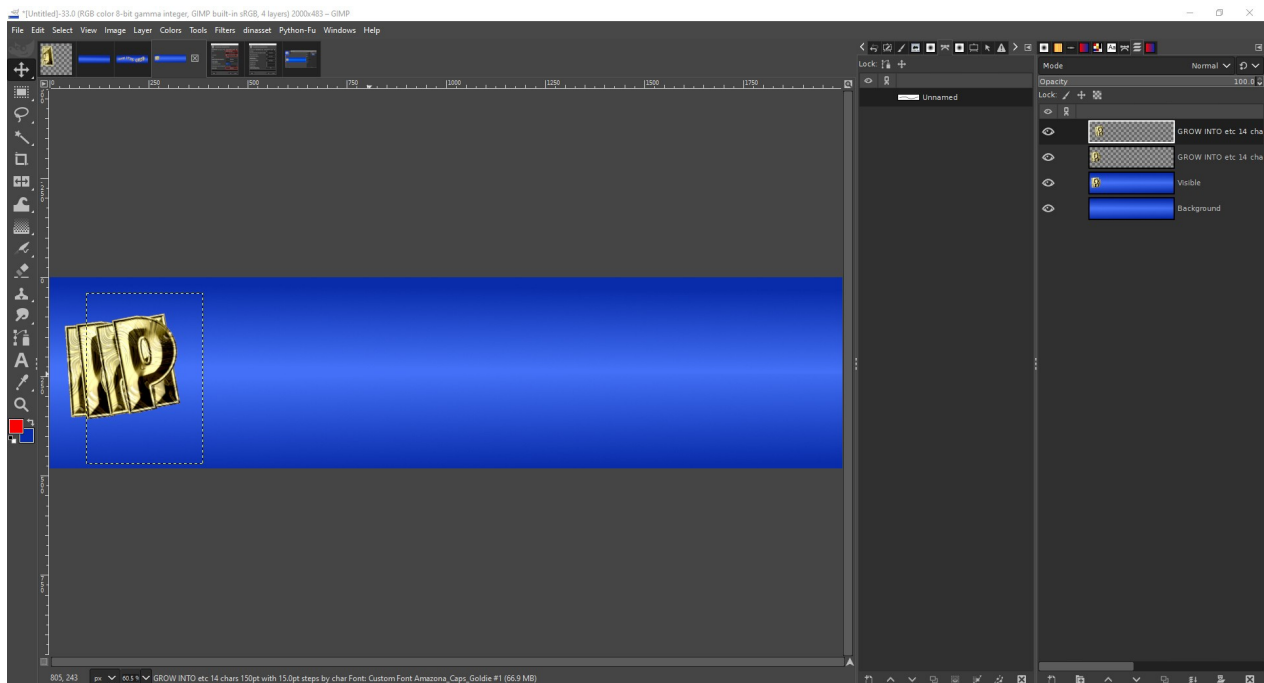
I used steps of 5 until zero was reached.

To speed up your workflow make a copy of the visible layers after each use of FontSlab to prepare a set of layers for the animation. Use your keyboard shortcut to create the copy.

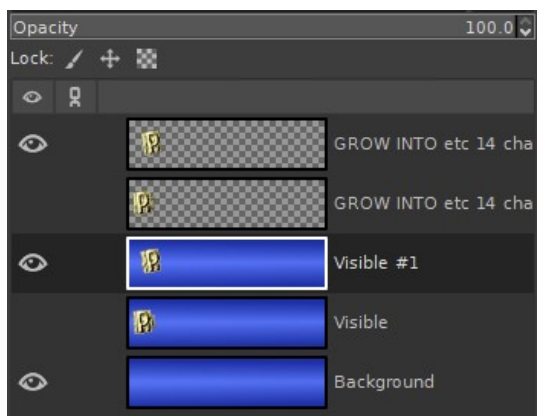
The screenshot below shows the layer dock with my newly created my copy of the two layers.



So for me the new value to use for the 'Adjust spacing between characters' option would be -75. My outcome:



Make only the newly created layer and the background layer visible before creating a copy of the two. The screenshot of the layer dock shows the these two layers and the newly created composite layer (Visible #1).



Just keep repeating the process:

Open FontSlab

Adjust the value of 'Adjust spacing between characters' on Tab 2 of the dialog

Click 'OK' on the dialog to create a new layer

Make only the new layer and the background layer visible

Create a 'new from visible' composite layer

Until you have reached a value of zero with the 'Adjust spacing between characters' option.

A partial layer dock view of my layers:



The next step is to delete all character layers without a background and then create an optimized version of the file:

Filters>>Animation>>Optimize (for GIF)

Finally you can save the file as a gif by using the

File>>Export As...

option using the gif extension.

Remember to check the 'As animation' option on the save dialog.