
Subject: Re: should I get Mac IDL 4 or 5?

Posted by [mgs](#) on Tue, 21 Oct 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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In article <344AEE8F.4B47@shapley.colorado.edu>, Mark Fardal <fardal@shapley.colorado.edu> wrote:

> Hi,

>

> I want to get IDL for the Mac, since it's cheap for CU students.

> Now, I can only get one release, either IDL 4 or 5. And some

> people have complained about the stability of IDL5 for the

> Mac--tends to crash machines (even with OS8) and so forth. I'm

> not really using the new features of IDL5 right now, although in

> theory it would be nice to have 5 for consistency with the unix boxes

> at work. So are the complaints justified? Does RSI ever release bug

> fixes? And which version should I get?

I made the switch from 4.0 to 5.0 (beta) on my Macs a few months ago. Although 4.0.x and 5.0.2 are not without bugs in either the Mac or UNIX versions, I like 5.0.2 better than 4.0.x. One of the biggest improvements is access to the command line while your applications are running. You can edit and recompile the event handlers to see the effects very quickly without having to stop and restart your application.

As far as stability goes, I can't get IDL 5.x to start by selecting an IDL file with MacOS 8.0, but if I start it from (an alias of) the application, it runs great. I don't recall 5.0.2 crashing on me in months.

I'd definitely like to see more timely bug fixes from RSI, but they are not alone in that regard. I'd suggest 5.0 as the version to get.

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