Subject: Re: opinions needed on IDL, PV-WAVE
Posted by David Ritscher on Thu, 04 Dec 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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David Fanning, Ph.D., writes:
> Jason Fritz (j.p.fritz@ieee.org) writes:

>> How difficult is it for someone to learn either
>> of these 4GLs to develop stand alone apss with nice
>> GUIs?

> Uh, do you mean *with* or *without* my new IDL book?

> Seriously, it you really mean "stand alone" applications,
> then neither IDL or PV-Wave is going to do you any good.
> Both require a license to run. MatLab is the only one of
> the three that can generate stand-alone C code, although
> I hear that it is not always such great code and there are
> some limitations.
A couple of additional comments to this point:
The RSI folks have been known to compile an application into an
stand-alone executable. However, this is probably not relevant to
your goal, since this is a very expensive process. There is a
run-time IDL and PV-Wave. As David mentions, it must be licensed on
each machine, but one can negotiate fairly reasonable licensing fees
for such. So, if 'stand-alone' simply means several people are going
to use it in-house, all three packages would probably be o.k.; but if
you have numerous users spread around, it could get annoying to deal
with the licensing overhead.

Concerning compiling Matlab: There are two levels of compilation
available, one that needs Matlab to be running (and puts us then in
the same situation w.r.t licensing as with IDL and PV-Wave), and the
second that truly generates stand-alone code. Under this latter
option, graphics aren't available, and only a subset of the Matlab
functionality is available. Thus this won't necessarily meet your
needs for generating stand-alone code.

You mention using the net - both IDL and PV-Wave have developed some
nice tools in this direction - see their respective WWW sites.

Someday, one of the companies is going to provide a friendlier
migration path, where one can develop code in a 4-GL language and be
able to easily convert it to a stand-alone application, thus gaining
the best of both worlds. I think there's a big market that
would be very interested in such a product.

> I personally think IDL is the cat's meow. At least *most*
> of the time. :-)
If object-oriented programming is of concern, I would probably second
that, since the RSI folks are making great strides forward in this
area now. Otherwise, there are many consideration between the three
packages, that aren't easy to summarize. It would be great if someone
had time to take on a FAQ on this theme (IDL vs. PV-Wave vs MATLAB).
It's a common theme here (perhaps this will someday become the
comp.lang.idl-pvwave-matlab newsgroup!).

So, David, where's The Book??? :-)

Best wishes,

David Ritscher

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