
Subject: Re: IDL/PV-WAVE strengths/weaknesses
Posted by [thompson](#) on Tue, 06 Jul 1993 20:39:09 GMT
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mms@unislcl.sl.unisys.com (Mark Scoville) writes:

> Robert E Kearney (rob@reflex.biomed.mcgill.ca) wrote:

>> I am considering the purchase of a visualization package and
>> would appreciate any input regarding the relative merits of IDL
>> and pv-wave (or any other similar package).

> I spent over two years as a software engineer at GE NMR in Fremont CA
> developing GUI's utilizing Sun's DevGuide and RSI's IDL. You should
> know that IDL is the progenitor of PV~WAVE. It was about 2 years ago
> when RSI sold off to Precision Visuals. Now PV~WAVE is a product unto
> itself.

Just to make sure that there is no misunderstanding, IDL from RSI didn't go away. It is still available, but is now in direct competition with Visual Numerics (previously Precision Visuals) PV-wave.

> I was using the tool to display NMR data sets upwards of 32Mb in size.
> IDL is a very powerful tool. Over the past year and a half, they have
> implemented a widget set to facilitate the use of IDL (vs. the regular
> command line interface). Perhaps you know that all of IDL CLI and its
> widget set can be scripted. As far as the widget set goes, I highly
> recommend keeping with the Motif side (considering the UniForum announcement last March where Sun now is dropping OPEN LOOK in the light
> of the up and coming Windows NT).

On the other hand, you don't need to know whether your program will be running under Motif, Openlook, Microsoft Windows or (in beta-test) Macintosh Windows. IDL's widget calls are the same regardless of the operating system. I believe that PV-wave has a similar setup.

> One side note. At the time IDL was significantly less expensive than
> PV~WAVE, but had the same functionality (before the sell-off). At this
> point, that is ancient pricing, I'm sure things have changed.

Nope, as far as I can tell, that's still true.

> Regards.

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Bill Thompson
