
Subject: Re: Free Advice, was: PostScript and IDL
Posted by [Gary Bust](#) on Sun, 31 May 1998 07:00:00 GMT
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In article <MPG.fd92ed4304bae919897c0@news.frii.com>,
davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

>
> Kenneth P. Bowman (bowman@null.tamu) writes:
>
>> When David spends a lot of time helping me, I buy one of his books. :-)
>> That way we both benefit.
>
> When Ken buys a book he gets another couple hours of free
> consulting help. When he mentions the book on the newsgroup
> he gets a free Coyote T-Shirt and a tape of yours truly
> telling Coyote stories. :-)
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> P.S. Just kidding about this. I don't want to be responsible
> for turning the newsgroup into a testimonial about
> the benefits of the book. But I do greatly appreciate Ken's,
> and everyone else's, support.
>
> -----
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting
> E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
> Phone: 970-221-0438
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
>

I like the idea of either a single application, or a suite of applications
around a concept that could be purchased for a reasonable amount of money, and
that support/upgrades were handled in a similar way to the unix gnu world.

I use IDL a lot. Every day basically. I write lots of "amateur" routines
that do not get well documented, are not well maintained etc. However, as a
scientist, if someone wanted them for free - they could have them - as is. I
think that is the policy of a lot of scientific centers (based on what is
publicly available for IDL - though perhaps a bit more professionally written
:-}). But, there is a big difference to go to truly well written, well
thought out, documented applications. A suite of Plotting/printing routines
being a good example. For example, I have had a student spending about 6
months of her time, developing a gui driven plotting program for our
particular brand of ionospheric data. We have it in house, it is good - for

our amatuer level - and the other people in my group are clamoring for upgrades. I have to wonder if something similar was available for ~ \$100 per license or so, if it would not be attractive....

As far as the rest goes - I would not know who David is, or the others who give their time and advice (as well as compensated things like books etc), if they did not appear on this site. So, in my opinion I consider it a service to the community - no one is hawking wares, and this is a small enough community, that in general, Barnes and Nobles does not keep 10 IDL programming books on it shelves.....so, this is the source of info.

Cheers,

Gary Bust
Applied Research Labs
University of Texas

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