
Subject: Re: IDL 5.2 reviews?

Posted by [rmlongfield](#) on Thu, 05 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT

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In article <owg1bz33so.fsf@kracko.harvard.edu>,

Randall Smith <rsmith@kracko.harvard.edu> wrote:

Well, speaking as an ex-NASA postdoc, yes, having those file formats

> is terrific but RSI had better watch the cost, especially for the
> small-time Unix users. I had some serious problems convincing my boss
> to go for the upgrade to v5, and many new Unix workstations are now
> IDL-free, at least where I was. When the cost of a new IDL license is
> 50% of the workstation cost, leaving it off starts sounding better and
> better.

>

> This doesn't really affect places where there is a "systems group"
> that handles computer purchases and that ensures that all is well.
> But at least in the research groups, more and more computers are
> bought simply on research grants that have finite budgets. And these
> research groups eventually propose the multi-million dollar projects
> that buy IDL as a matter of course. Unless, of course, the underlying
> research group couldn't afford IDL before, and so nobody bothers to
> buy it now. It's a slow-brewing problem, though--one that won't show
> it's head until it's too late to do anything.

>

> Randall Smith

> rsmith@cfa.harvard.edu

>

Just some thoughts on the cost of IDL. I am part of a small research group which is part of the Netherlands weather forecasting service. We just had a meeting with the CREASO people (who represent RSI in Europe) to try and get some sort of deal because we needed more licenses and the cost is very high. Well, they felt that the market justifies the cost and that other companies were paying the high cost, so we should too. We could not convince them that a non-profit organization has less money to throw around than a car company. My feeling from this meeting was that we weren't buying enough licenses for them to feel threatened if we decide to abandon IDL. It would be nice if they had something in between a university license (which was relatively cheap) and a company license. I don't know. I like IDL mostly because this is what I had to use when I got here (My other choice was SGI's Explorer) and widgets are fun. Mathlib was mentioned as a competitor but I don't know much about it except for a few comments on this usergroup. Well, enough said...Back to my widgets!

Rose

p.s. Please, David Fanning, don't mention age as a handicap. Some of us are older than you might think. ;-) My feeling, one is old the moment he or she

decides that learning something new is too much trouble.

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