Subject: Re: GUI Builder limited to Windows platform (LONG)
Posted by Pete Riley on Wed, 11 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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Hi Dave,

The GUI builder is slick, but it doesn't really save you any time
programming (as long as you can type more than 10 words a minute). It can't
hide the nuts and bolts...only make them look like something else. In a
previous incarnation, WIDED (which is certainly not a fair comparison,
considering how much work has gone into the GUI builder), I would use a lot
to get a quick look at how my widgets would appear on the screen. But, I
would still go back to simple programming for the final product. (A bug in
the READF in the beta version made me stop using 5.2b regularly, but I
suspect that I'll still continue to write from scratch even with the
corrected release).

On your remarks about platform independence, when I first used IDL (version
1) it only came in VMS flavour ....not very platform independent! And since
RSI is a company, they surely must pitch for 'the market'.....after all,
they're not gn-doing it for free.   I don't believe they ever supported BE?
And, strictly speaking IDL is not really platform independent - they only
provide versions for most of the common operating systems. Moreover, you
know that any serious code must be 'nudged' to run on different platforms
(I'm particularly annoyed at the moment by having to try to get rid of a
bunch of DOS calls in an old programme I'm updating). I would not be
surprised if VMS was dropped in the near future (but hopefully NASA/Goddard
is loud?). If Jobs doesn't keep the iiiiiiiiiiii-mprovements to the Mac,
then that could quite easily fall by the wayside. Neither, of course, would
be a big deal if you're not using either OS (and at least 95% (depending on
how you define 'users') aren't). What is somewhat disturbing is the
transition from UNIX as being the mainstay of IDL to Windows, which the
introduction of the GUI builder is obviously signalling. But, if UNIX isn't
paying the bills, and you've got a 450 MHz Pentium II with 1/2 a gig of
memory and 50 gigs of space then you rule the world...at least in my little
mind.

-Pete Riley