
Subject: Re: Some more tricky questions.....

Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 20 Jan 1999 08:00:00 GMT

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Phil Aldis (jmkimber@dera.gov.uk) writes:

- > Everything always goes wrong at once doesn't it. Here are some more
- > things which I suspect can't be done.....
- >
- > 1. I'm trying to create a properties box and I thought it would be
- > quite nice to have tabs, like windows properties boxes.

The RSI Professional Services Group guys once wrote an IDL program with tabs. I can't quite remember how they did it, but lots of draw widget images, I think.

In any case, I agree with JD. Ten minutes hard thinking about alternative presentations that stay within the normal bounds of IDL widget capabilities is usually the preferred solution. If you really want to do the fancy things, think about becoming a Windows or Motif programmer. :-)

- > 2. Is there any way within the direct graphics system to have total
- > control over text and be able to specify height as well as width?

"Total control"? In IDL? No, I don't think so. You can change the default character size with the SET_CHARACTER_SIZE keyword to the DEVICE command. In this way you could control both the height and width of vector characters, sorta.

- > 3. When you specify the position of a surface plot by
- > POSITION=[0.2,0.2,0.8,0.8,0.3,0.9], what do those numbers translate
- > into on the actual window. If you draw lines at those points, then
- > there seems to be little correspondence between the position of the
- > surface and the lines.

Ooh, here is a good question!

The default coordinate system in IDL has (0,0) in the lower-left corner of the window and the Z axis coming out of the window at you. I think these POSITION values pertain to the location of the plot in *that* coordinate system.

But if you have tried to make a surface plot in object graphics you know that you have to rotate, scale, and translate that drawing coordinate system into the coordinate system of the view. IDL does the same thing. The surface plot is scaled and translated into the center of the display window. You have no

control over how that is done in direct graphics and the result,
of course, is that those POSITION coordinates don't appear to
do too much. :-(

Cheers,

David

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