
Subject: Re: Best, Fastest platform for IDL 5.2 (NT or UNIX)
Posted by [Patrick V. Ford](#) on Wed, 15 Sep 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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In article <37DD70F9.D76719BB@sbrc.umanitoba.ca>, Richard Tyc
<richt@sbrc.umanitoba.ca> wrote:

> IDL users,
>
> To add to the another similar post, I would like to know from the
> experts what system they would buy if they had \$10K - \$30K (speed being
> an important factor) ?
>
> We are running on a SGI O2 R5K, 576Mb RAM and it is pathetically
> slow!! Our project has recently received some infusion of capital and I
> would like to ask what hardware platform would be ideal ? I am not
> opposed to switching over to NT.
>
> The application makes heavy use of object graphics, volume rendering
> with cutting planes etc. (eg. render volumes of 512x512x100 with
> real-time motion updates using the trackball object)
>
> I was thinking of moving up to a SGI Octane with the R12K CPU (or
> multiple CPU).
> Any performance comparisons with IDL on the new Pentium III 600 MHz
> machines vs. UNIX workstations ?
>
> Any benefit in moving into a multi-CPU system (NT or IRIX) for IDL ?
> does it even make use of multi-processor for rendering etc. ?
>
> Thanks
>
>
> Rich

If you must have UNIX or NT and can wait several months, then you
should look at
MacOS X. It has a BSD kernel (Mach 3?) and, if you wish, the Mac
look-and-feel can
be stripped off and replaced with a CLI or X-windows. Comments re:
Linux-PPC and
MacOS X
<http://macos-x.com/>

The G4 PPC with AltiVec accelerates certain numerically intensive
process by up to
5x. It is claimed at the current clock speeds to perform 1Gflop with

burst of 4Gflops.

IDL currently supports AltiVec.

<http://www.mot.com/SPS/PowerPC/AltiVec/>

http://www.rsinc.com/pressrelease/pr_083199.cfm

Clock speed for clock speed, the G4 is significantly faster than the PIII, but currently it is not running at 700Mhz to 1 GHz either.

In terms of multiprocessors systems the current offerings on the Mac are weak, but as far as clusters or parallel processing, it is far stronger than reported in most media.

<http://www.macintouch.com/cluster.html>

Since IBM released its mother-board specs for the PPC, rumor has it that several companies are going to make UNIX- based versions.

I hope this helps.

As an aside, does IDL support Linux-PPC and OpenGL? It seems to me that support for graphics card like 3DFx would improve performance across multiple platforms.

Regards

Patrick Ford
Baylor College of Medicine
Pford@bcm.tmc.edu
