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Subject: Re: Q: Xmanager explanation?

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

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David L. Keller (davekeller@pop.omah.uswest.net) writes:

> Using IDL in two different projects about 10 years apart,  
> I have yet to figure out what 'Xmanager' does for me.  
>  
> I realize that I have to keep track of widget ids, which  
> I do by creating a common array of NAME and ID pairs:  
>   a = {nameandnumber, wnam : "", wnum : 0L}  
> I call a simple routine to add to the list of widgets:  
>   add2namenumber,'DataMenu',data\_menu\_id  
> To retrieve a widget id, I have a function 'wnum' that  
> converts the NAME to the NUMBER (ID):  
>   widget\_control,wnum('DataMenu'),blah, etc=andSoOn)  
>  
> I am more comfortable going through this effort myself,  
> because I -dont- know what xmanager does for me. Ok, I  
> do know that it keeps track of the widget id's, but as  
> I say, I'd rather do it myself and understand it.  
>  
> Anyone able to clearly explain what I get with xmanager?  
> What it's drawbacks might be?

I'm trying to be serious here, but all I can think  
of are wisecracks this morning. :-(

Drawbacks!? There are no drawbacks to using XManager,  
believe me. A widget program that doesn't use  
XManager is like going to the Rave with your  
hair slicked back with Brylcreem. Let's just say  
your chances of getting lucky are not too good.

XManager doesn't keep track of widget IDs, at  
least not in any meaningful way that will help you  
run your program. What it does keep track of is  
which event should be sent to which event handler.  
If you are still running IDL on your PDP-8 and you  
like flipping those switches to program the darn  
thing, then you will probably want to manage your  
own events. But the rest of us use XManager to  
take care of all this onerous work.

Your simple routine to keep track of widget IDs  
and names is nice, but it's just so much easier  
to use the built-in Find\_By\_UserName keyword.

> I also don't trust Xmanager in that I am not sure that  
> I can trust it with the 'interrupt' magic, and type IDL  
> commands at the same time.

What version of IDL did you say you were running? IDL 1.5? Setting the NOBLOCK keyword gives you access to any widget program you want to run and access to the IDL command line at the same time.

There are any number of well-written widget programs around. I suggest you download a couple of them and have a look at what you are missing. A lot has happened in the 10 years you have been gone. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. OK, I get it. This guy is really Martin Schultz just having a go at me for some fun I poked at him in this newsgroup a while ago. :-)

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