
Subject: Re: IDL Shareware

Posted by [ronn](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2000 08:00:00 GMT

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David (and anyone else listening),

First of all, it is not a good sign that you and I are the only ones talking about this!

Some comments:

>I think it is partly because the idea of cross-platform
>compatibility, when it comes to IDL programs having anything
>but the most basic functionality, is a cruel myth. :-(

I half agree, BUT... I have seven really complicated IDL programs in my IDL Development Book that run on all the IDL platforms. I wrote them on a windows 95 PC and then retested them on every other platform. Granted, I had to make some changes but they were small. (One exception is the Macintosh and how you have to click twice in every window. Once to make it active and the second to push a button (or whatever).) As I remember, I only spent a fews (part time) fixing all of the differences. Just look in my code and see how many platform specific comments there are...not many! But you are right, the GUI layout is absolutely the most challenging.

But shareware doesn't just have to be entire applications. Take FSC_inputfield.pro that you just sent me. I just tested it on IDL5.1 on Alpha Unix, IDL5.2 SGI Unix, and IDL5.2 VMS and it works great! It is certainly worth a few dollars to me for the privilige of using it! (We'll talk later...) Based on my experience, getting compound widgets to work across platforms is easier than an entire application. One of my shareware routines lets you set up an input field with units (distance, angle, or velocity). If you set it up for meters and enter 100 feet it will convert it back to meters. I have had no problem with this on any of the platforms.

I also like the idea of specialized routines being shareware. For instance, I have some IDL routines and a DLM that interface to a really fast genetic algorithm on WIN32 systems. Now, I have put so much time into this that I don't want to give it away. But if someone was willing to pay a small fee I would be interested. I know other people also have great routines that they don't really want to give away for free.

So why don't we hear from the rest of the newsgroup on this?

-Ronn

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