Subject: Re: On the differences between idl and pvwave
Posted by keller on Fri, 20 Sep 1991 03:12:51 GMT
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In article <51116@netnews.upenn.edu> yee@mipgsun.mipg.upenn.edu (Conway Yee)
writes:(only slightly trimmed)
>
> From what I understand, the company that markets pvwave licensed
> idl and markets it under their own name. In the near future, my
> lab will be purchasing idl/pvwave. From what I can see, the two
> are identical products. What are the essential differences between
> the two and which should we buy?

At the National Severe Storms Lab we have IDL. My local university, which
shall go unnamed, bought PVWAVE.
They are indeed 99% the same product.
The essential differences:
Graphics commands especially go by the 'keyword' concept in PVWAVE, while
IDL goes (VAX version) by 'parameters':
   IDL> CONTOUR,agrid,[1,2,5,10,20,50,100]
   WAVE>CONTOUR,agrid,labels=[1,2,5,10,20,50,100]
The latter is too much typing for an INTERACTIVE programming language IMO.
I also believe that the former is better for 'sophisticated' programming
where you might build commands then execute them (if you are so inclined).

Also, both come with a 'user library', sort of a small scale IMSL-like
set of routines. IDL's is useful. PVWAVE's was full of bugs.

PVWAVE comes with a 'window based tutorial' which I found simply a nuisance.
The way to learn IDL, like any programming language, is by cloning some
short and sweet programs that do typical things (I have such a set of
screen size programs that do elementary plotting, contouring, map drawing,
map plotting, basic image things, etc...call me).

I could ramble a long time on this. IDL is a good scientific programming
language. I used to use FORTRAN, now I use IDL. I am willing to provide
information, ranging from getting a sample manual to you, to sending real
programs that do real science.

Dave Keller   "I own no stock in Research Systems Incorporated"