
Subject: Re: GUI Builder for Unix

Posted by [Ben Tupper](#) on Tue, 21 Mar 2000 08:00:00 GMT

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rappold@zedat.fu-berlin.de wrote:

> David Fanning schrieb:

>>

>> Jae-Seung Kim (jkim03@maxwell.ee.washington.edu) writes:

>>

>>> Is there a GUI Builder for Unix environment?

>>

>> Yes, several of us. And your GUIs are guaranteed to

>> be a hell of a lot better than anything IDL could

>> come up with. :-)

>>

>> Cheers,

>>

>> David

>>

>> P.S. Let's just say that for a \$75 investment and

>> about 5 hours of your time even YOU could be writing

>> GUIs that would beat whatever IDL could come up

>> with in a GUI builder hands-down. Absolutely guaranteed. :-)

>>

> I'm not into GUI's can you be a bit more explicite?

>

>

Hello,

I'm not sure that David's softsell tongue-in-cheek response is what you were looking for. GUI is an acronym for Graphical User Interface; GUIs tend to be a collection of buttons, slidebars, droplists, etc. (called widgets) that software users can manipulate. The GUI builder mentioned above is an gizmo for building a GUI inteface by dragging-and-dropping the buttons and slidebars into position. Not all versions of IDL come with the GUI builder. As you, the programmer, drag and drop the components you want to include the interface, the GUIBuilder automatically generates the coding needed to respond to user actions (such as pressing a button with a mouse click.) GUIBuilders are common with database packages like ACCESS and Visual DBASE. GUI interfaces make dynamic data analysis and visualization easy. Objects really shine when you build GUIs around them.

IDL's GUIBuilder places all of the coding in a single event loop, events being actions that the user intiates (like pushing a button.) This put-everything-in-one-handler runs counter to the idea of writing code

in small reusable bits; I find the all-encompassing coding generated by IDL's GUIBuilder unwieldy. David espouses a different approach, where the programmer builds the GUI with smaller (or at least less unwieldy) bits of code. His style is easier to create and maintain than the GUIBuilder approach.

Unfortunately, the IDL references are not the place to learn about GUI/Widget programming. It's really too bad, I think they are missing a nice opportunity. Fortunately, David has written a wonderful book on IDL programming that can give you an excellent start. I highly recommend it.

You might also check out Ronn Kling's book that address widget programming with a different slant. I can't say as much about his book because I just got it. I like what I see so far. Ronn also addresses objects from the ground up.

I hope that gives you the info you asked for.

Ben

P.S. Neither Ronn nor David have recompensed me for the above, but any contributions to the Ben-Tupper-Really-Wants-An-Alden-Ocean-Rowing-Shell-Fund are welcome.

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Ben Tupper

Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Science
tupper@seadas.bigelow.org

pemaquidriver@tidewater.net
