Subject: Sum: MATLAB or IDL?

Posted by kropveld on Mon, 18 Apr 1994 15:58:43 GMT

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Thanks to everyone who responded to my question which program to choose, MATLAB, IDL of PV~WAVE; if you want to do mainly signal processing (in neurophysiology).

I have had reactions form: Mark Cook, Ralph Finch, Jan Habraken, Harmonic Software, James Mitchell, Rc Olsen, Darren Orbach, Chris Ruckman, Philip Turet, and Peter Webb.

I will briefly summarize all the reactions I received (without quoting the authors, sorry). This summary may not be complete, because I suspect I lost some messages un UseNet. :(
Please, if you have anything to comment on this, please do.

o Every user was very satisfied about the product he was using. Either MATLAB, IDL or PV~WAVE.
o Users working with both MATLAB and IDL/WAVE preferred MATLAB for signal processing.
o MATLAB's Signal Processing Toolbox is very powerful, and there is nothing like it in IDL/WAVE. Although you could write something similar with the basic functios IDL/WAVE provide.
o IDL and PV~WAVE are basically the same, just the widgets (user interface?) are different. One user said WAVE was much more powerful; two claimed IDL was way better.
o Because of the widgets IDL/WAVE looks more user-friendly.
o IDL/WAVE is more powerful for large programming projects.
o MATLAB does not support 3D matrices, but version 5 will.
o IDL/WAVE is more flexible with different data structures.
o MATLAB has better user support on UseNet.
o There is also O-Matrix with numerous signal processing routines. It is faster then MATLAB and IDL and is also cheaper.

(NOTE: the information above is taken directly from comments I received.
Most of the information however, were just statements, no reasoning why.)

Personally I conclude:
o There is no clear winner, any program will do what I want.
o If MATLAB will not support 3D matrices and flexible data structures in future, this will be a major problem for me.
o I like MATLAB for its user support on UseNet. (25-50 messages a day, vs IDL with only 5 a day and most questions remaining unanswered!) IDL/WAVE's policy is to remain silent on UseNet, I really do not understand why.
o I do not like the yearly licence fee charged by MATLAB, and the expensive

toolboxes which I have to buy seperately.

I have ordered demos from all companies, and will have a closer look at them.
Thanks to all who replied, apologies for not replying you personally. :-)

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