
Subject: Re: Top 10 for old farts
Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Mon, 31 Jul 2000 07:00:00 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

>
> Joseph B. Gurman (gurman@gsfc.nasa.gov) writes:
>
>
>> Seriously (once again), it would be nice to be able to pay for a
>> base license, and add on, at extra cost:
>>
>> 1. objects
>>
>> 2. QuickTime support (per codec)
>>
>> 3. other features requiring RSI to pay license fees (GIF?)
>
> I suppose it is inevitable, as IDL grows ever larger, that
> we begin to pay for add-ons. RSI has already taken this
> course with DataMiner and the Wavelet Toolkit. But I am
> dead set against this proposal, Joe.
>
> I submit that
> objects have the same ability to transform how we work
> with our data.
>
>
>
> Cheers,
>
> David

I strongly agree with David here! Although I must admit that I have not yet developed one really functional object application (just too much "Need this yesterday!" stuff), the availability of objects surely changed my perception of data analysis and allows for a much better strategic planning of data analysis software - even if in the end it is written as a "classical" program. At least in my case, there is still a gap between my mind and my fingers: I am thinking objects now, but I am still typing a lot of non-object programs. Yet I hope that my fingers will catch up within the next year or so ...

I also would like to direct your attention to the evolvement of FORTRAN which in some ways can be perceived to be the most conservative programming language one can think of (tons of legacy code, no one

really learns it these days, so people learn it from looking at - yes! -
legacy code ;-) So far,
all global atmospheric model sources that I have seen have their origin
in FORTRAN77 code (or even earlier). But, I also see many groups
reworking their code to FORTRAN90, and progressively using modules. This
could really be seen
as a big step towards object oriented programming, because modules are
designed to provide some of the major object features: (1) reusability,
(2) encapsulation, (3) grouping of things that belong together. Now, try
to think 3 (or maybe 5) years ahead and let people analyze their model
results. Would they want to use an IDL that does not support objects,
that forces them to go back in time?

Cheers,
Martin

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