Hi Folks,

Amazon.com has finally placed my IDL Programming Techniques,
2nd Edition in their on-line catalog, so I guess it is time
to make the official announcement of its release. :-)

If you want to read all about it, you can find most of the
details here:

  http://www.dfanning.com/documents/books.html

Briefly, this is a fairly extensive re-write of the 1st
Edition that so many of you have graciously purchased.
I have completely re-written the entire second half of
the book that outlines my approach to IDL programming.
I did this primarily to bring the techniques up to date
with the way I write programs today. This means programs
that are, as much as I can make them, independent of the
graphics output device and independent of the depth of
your color display. IMHO, programs should work the same
everywhere. :-)

In addition to this update, I added 50+ pages of
additional information in other sections of the book,
particularly with respect to working with colors
and pointers. I don't think a single chapter was left
untouched.

I also added a longish and important chapter on
writing object programs in IDL. Don't worry, I used
direct graphics. I didn't want to scare anyone to
death. But *every* program I write for clients contains
objects of almost every sort. If you learn how to write
them, I guarantee they will change the way you program.
This is not the be-all and end-all chapter on objects--
in fact, just the opposite. It is a place to get started,
that's all. You'll be introduced to some of the vocabulary
and create an object or two.

A new book means new typos, and I'm afraid there are
many still in this book. Rest assured, however, that
I take typos as evidence of personal failure and if you
report them, I fix them ASAP. While *your* book won't be
perfect, the next guy's will. (Or as close as I can

possibly get it.) Error's of fact and judgement, of course, happen too, but those are entirely my fault and can't be helped, probably. I urge you to read everything with a grain of salt. I don't like wishy-washy writing, and I *do* have a point of view, but you don't have to believe everything you read. My real goal is that you will find it interesting enough not to fall asleep and, possibly, get a couple of new ideas.

Because the book is 150+ pages larger than the 1st Edition, it costs a bit more. I continue to use high-quality paper, and a coil binding, however, because I still think it is important that the darn thing lay flat on your desk. If you have thoughts about this, I'd like to hear them. I could perfect-bind them, but I couldn't update them as frequently and I'm not sure they would be as useful while you are actually writing programs. They would, however, be cheaper to print.

Amazon.com is offering a $50 gift certificate for the person brave enough to write the first review of the book. And, of course, I've been known to look favorably on persons saying nice things about me in print. :-)

This book, as well as the first, is almost entirely due to the fine folks brave enough to hit the SEND button on this newsgroup. I've learned more hanging out here than I have anywhere else in my IDL career. Thank you all so much for the questions you answer, but especially for the questions you ask.

Best Regards,

David

P.S. Let's just say my ISP *still* hasn't placed my ftp site back where it belongs. If you have trouble finding the files that go with the book, look here:

  ftp://ftp.dfanning.com/pub/davidf/outgoing/coyote2nd

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David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155