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Subject: Re: IDL on VMS??

Posted by [Joseph B. Gorman](#) on Wed, 15 Nov 2000 08:00:00 GMT

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In article <MPG.14760e1ef507058a989c78@news.frii.com>,  
davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

> Harvey Rarback (rarback@slac.stanford.edu) writes:  
>  
>> Is anybody else as upset as I am about Kodak's lack of support for  
>> OpenVMS after  
>> version 5.4? Considering the history of IDL on the platform and the  
>> still large  
>> number of scientists using VMS, it seems like a mistake to me.  
>  
> Well, at one time we were \*all\* on VMS. (Or, at least  
> those of us with gray hairs were, Harvey.) But that's  
> another sad story.  
>  
> How many OpenVMS new licenses do you suppose were  
> sold last year? I'm sure it eventually gets to the  
> point where the numbers don't even begin to justify  
> the effort. I know nothing about the facts in this  
> case, but I do know that in the past RSI has always  
> gone WAY beyond when the numbers made sense before  
> yanking a version.  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
> David

I truly doubt the new licenses support IDL development, though they  
certainly do give RSI a view of what platforms to concentrate on.

I'd be more interested in the revenue flow from maintenance  
agreements per platform. In the interests of openness, I will divulge  
that 5 of our 21 licenses are on OpenVMS platforms, including some with  
unlimited, node-locked licenses (read "expensive to maintain").  
Maintaining those licenses represents 35% of our ~ \$14K annual  
maintenance burden, and while I'm relieved to be able to do without it,  
I wonder whether or not there are enough OpenVMS IDL licenses out there  
with maintenance agreements to support one (or one-half full-time  
equivalent) support programmer at RSI.

If I were to speculate, I'd guess the one OpenVMS guru/guruette has  
decided not to work for Kodak but strike out for new work, and OVMS  
applications programmers are getting harder to find each year....  
outside of old folks' homes, that is. "Why, I remember our first VAX...."

None of which means we'll be dropping any OpenVMS machines anytime soon, since as Bill Thompson pointed out, we use them for spacecraft instrument ops, but it may mean we never buy another maintenance upgrade to IDL again. \$300 for tech support per year sounds about right. Hope RSI is happy to lose our \$13K of support business per year, since it makes more sense to keep our unix, MAC, &c. machines running the same version as our OVMS ones for compatibility, unless a specific new feature makes it worthwhile to change (haven't seen many lately, but I'm hoping for better AltiVec support in the Mac OS X version).

I'd like to thank David Stern and the RSI team for 20 years of excellent product and support. It's been real.

Joe Gurman

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