
Subject: Re: Mac OSX

Posted by [Randall Skelton](#) on Wed, 10 Oct 2001 21:54:35 GMT

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On Wed, 10 Oct 2001, David Fanning wrote:

>> Are they an alternative?

>

> No.

>

David,

There are alternatives. I'll admit that none of them can compete with the wide cross-platform support that IDL has enjoyed over the years but it looks like RSI's cross-platform marketing approach has vanished.

Many alternatives for unix based systems can be found on the Scientific Applications for Linux site which I've posted a few times now:

<http://sal.kachinatech.com/D/1/>

More specifically...

The R data language looks promising.
<http://www.r-project.org/>

Octave, Scilab, and RLab are Matlab clones but neither has great graphics.
<http://www.octave.org/>
<http://www-rocq.inria.fr/scilab/scilab.html>
<http://rlab.sourceforge.net/> (no longer developed)

Yorick is another option (more like IDL)
<ftp://ftp-icf.llnl.gov/pub/Yorick/doc/index.html>

PyDL for Python Data Language is a parser with showing some promise
<http://nickbower.com/computer/pydl/>

SciGraphica is a clone of the popular commercial application "Microcal Origin".
<http://scigraphica.sourceforge.net/>

The TeLa tensor language looks ok but the web site is from 1997
<http://sumppu.fmi.fi/prog/tela.html>

Also the Euler Project:
<http://mathsrv.ku-eichstaett.de/MGF/homes/grothmann/euler/index.html>

For those only looking for a Mac/Windows solution you might want to try IGOR from Wavemetrics (Commercial but very affordable). Having been an IGOR user for many years prior to Matlab/IDL I can say their support and commitment is second to none. As of IGOR 3.16, the language it self lacked a little in linear algebra area and it was notably missing data structures last I checked. An object model and better 3d visualization tools would also be required for it to really compete directly with IDL. I would love to see the language develop a little further and a Linux version to become available... <http://www.wavemetrics.com>

Cheers,
Randall
