
Subject: Re: Message From RSI VP of Engineering
Posted by [Logan Lindquist](#) on Wed, 24 Oct 2001 16:02:37 GMT
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"Wolf Schweitzer" <wuff@swisswuff.ch> wrote in message
news:3BD678DC.9050505@swisswuff.ch...

- > To me, there is a misconception that some people assume we are using
- > Macs because of their "cutsy" interface and that can be "over" now.

The graphic user interface between different operating systems is only a tool used to created by different companies to allow you to perform work and create things using the hardware that is available to that particular system. The major debate over the GUI's does not really matter when the hardware aspect is not considered. THE CAUSE OF THE MAC OS VS PC OS DEBATE IS BASED SOLELY ON WHAT GUI YOU ARE MOST FAMILAR WITH. That is all that should be considered. How quickly can you get the work you need to get done on a particluar operating system is based on previous amount of time spent using that operating system IN ADDITION TO WHAT HARDWARE YOU MACHINE HAS.

- > An important advantage for IDL on Macintosh is its ability to do
- > parameter-passing with Applescript. In order to understand the
- > usefulness of that you need to know what other applications also do
- > Applescript on a Mac OS.

This is a true statement, as you can see...

IDL 5.5 Functional Summary
Development & Programming Tools
Macintosh AppleScript support

This is also supported under a windows enviroment.

IDL 5.5 Functional Summary
Development & Programming Tools
Callable Windows DLL
ActiveX control (dual interface)

- > As Applescript would not sell without Mac OS and we are all happy it's
- > also part of Mac OS X, I think that IDL would need to be shipped with
- > Mac OS X - it is just an essential ingredient for the scientific
- > Macintosh community.

I do not know the details of porting stuff that has been written for Linux over to OS X but I wouldn't image that they would be much different, since OS X is based on a Linux kernel. IDL already supports Linux on Alpha's and x86. So the real question is if they already have a compilation that is somewhat similar, and there is enough support to figure out the details of porting the x86 Linux or the Alpha Linux over to OS X, why not start an open sourced development of such?

I just went and reviewed what the VP of RSI said about this issue.

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"> > Now for the good news. In subsequent discussions with Apple they have
made
>> us aware of a commercial X-Windows library for OS X. We are in the
> process
>> of evaluating it for use in a native Unix/X-Windows implementation of
IDL
>> and ENVI for the Mac OS X platform. This would solve many technical
> issues
>> for us and allow us to continue to support the Macintosh platform both
>> natively and profitably, as it would leverage off our other Unix/X
>> platforms. The only thing this does not accomplish is providing IDL with
a
>> new Aqua UI and widget set."
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So it looks like the big gripe that many of you have is unfounded, because RSI can't afford to pay a graphic artist/computer scientist to redesign the GUI of IDL OR they don't want to change the look because of IDL is a professional product. Thus the redesign would make the interface less professional looking. At least they are considering porting to OS X. It all then comes down to a usability issue. OS X users would have to get used to a slightly different interface. I suggest stop complaining and wait to see they decide to support it.

Their business people are looking at the financial information related to how many Mac users buy or renew licenses each year. The decision so far seems to be a preliminary one. Business people will change their mind if it is deemed profitable for the company.

About the pricing. If everyone would remember back to economics, the quantity/demand curves and the price/cost curves will give us some useful tool to analyze their decisions.

Since it's software the quantity/demand curve operate a bit differently. Easy to produce once the code exists. The amount of demand gives us some idea of why it costs so much. I agree that they should reconsider their pricing structure for educational software[increase demand - lower prices], but I also think they are doing a good job of targeting the specific group

of students that is mostly likely to use the language in the business environment. When compared to mathematical programs such as MatLab or Mathematica, I think that those are better targeted towards Math majors. I haven't used either extensively. The trick is to get future users to become familiar with the language. You do not do this by limiting the number of copies that an institution can buy. These future users will hopefully equal future dollars spent once they graduate and get a job. I am an example! It would be helpful if someone who actually bought an educational version to contribute to the price range we are talking about.

That's all I have to say for now. It's lunch time and I'm hungry,

Logan Lindquist
