
Subject: Re: Sacrilegious but genuine question
Posted by [Francis Burton](#) on Fri, 11 Jan 2002 17:19:50 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

>> Seriously, I'm interested to know why you think it's no good.
>> Did RSI drop it for the same reason?
>
> [...]
>
> Insight lives on, though, in the form of Live Tools.
> But I'm afraid these don't meet your requirements for
> extensibility either, as RSI does not make the source
> code for these tools available. (Presumably they are
> too difficult to modify, even to solve time/date
> problems.) My biggest problem with these tools is
> that they do 90% of what I want (possibly), but it
> is that other 10% that I desperately need.

This goes to show how hard it is to get this kind of thing right!

According to the "Using Insight" manual, Insight is written in IDL. That suggests to me that the task of creating the general purpose extensible data display and analysis program that I am looking for is not particularly easy using IDL - otherwise wouldn't RSI have done this already? Or perhaps the market for such a program is really much smaller than I imagine.

> As you are discovering, this is probably true of
> most, if not all, applications. That is why a programming
> language is preferable to an application for most
> scientists. When you can combine a program (e.g., ENVI)
> with a programming language, you may have the best of
> all possible worlds.

Bingo! "ENVI boasts a fully-accessible underlying language, the Interactive Data Language (IDL)." This is exactly what I want, except tailored more to analyzing arrays of data than images - with all the power of IDL of course.

Pavel Romashkin mentioned Igor. I was under the impression that this was available only for the Mac, but having checked their website I see they also support a Windows version. This looks fairly close to my "holy grail". It's a pity they don't do Unix too. It might even be a good model for an open source effort.

> And there is a LOT of IDL code
> out there. For example, I think my MPI_PLOT program

- > would probably be quite easy to modify for your
- > purposes. You would have a very nice, interactive
- > program that displays data exactly the way you want
- > it to, and you could extend it easily.

I will certainly take a look at MPI_PLOT.

Thanks for another illuminating reply!

Francis
