
Subject: Re: Sacrilegious but genuine question
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 11 Jan 2002 16:26:36 GMT
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Francis Burton (F.Burton@biomed.gla.ac.uk) writes:

- > Seriously, I'm interested to know why you think it's no good.
- > Did RSI drop it for the same reason?

The official word is that IDL dropped Insight because it could not be made compatible with the Y2K problem. I, personally, take everything RSI says at face value, so I believe them. :-)

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.

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. 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 meant an IDL program that allowed you to display
- >> data the way you want to, without everything "quickly
- >> becoming a mess".
- >
- > Oh, alright. I think I should have a go at that myself -
- > make it my first IDL project.

It would be a perfect first project, I think.

- > "But IDL is a language, not an application."

Yes, but a high-level language that **builds** applications. That is the key, I think.

> Patience David - I'm learning! :-P

Me, too. :-)

Cheers,

David

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