
Subject: Re: Sacrilegious but genuine question
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 10 Jan 2002 14:01:32 GMT
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Francis Burton (F.Burton@biomed.gla.ac.uk) writes:

> I mentioned extensibility. What I would =really= like to be
> able to do in IDL is have windows which allow much greater
> interaction with plotted data. For instance, I have fairly
> large (50,000-500,000 point) digitized signals which I would
> like to 1) plot in an efficient manner (i.e. min-max for each
> x pixel rather than drawing a line between every point) and
> 2) create and overlay various mousable widgets which return
> values to IDL code. For example, I'd like to be able to click
> an arbitrary number of points under the trace to define a
> baseline for subtraction - and be able to adjust the position
> of already defined nodes, but constrain them to be monotonically
> increasing in x. In this case, the widget (if that is the right
> name for it) would return a list of (x,y) values. Then the IDL
> code could do the subtraction and replot the adjusted trace.
>
> The trouble is that I have no idea how to do this in IDL. I'm
> not even 100% sure that it is possible - at least, I believe
> the effort required would be prohibitive.

While I agree that the effort required to do this
for a novice IDL programmer might *seem* prohibitive,
I'm pretty sure its not really that hard. At least
it's no more prohibitive than most of the other projects
many of us take on as a matter of course.

What you want to do is exactly what you purchased
a programming language for. Yes, you have to know
a fair amount about your tools to do it. But how
is that any different from any other tool? (I'm
thinking of that wonderful stained glass window
handed down from my wife's ancestors that I assured
my wife I would have mounted in a fancy cabinet
several years ago now. I'm still learning how
to sharpen my new wood plane!)

> On the other hand,
> a well designed framework of the type exemplified by PYDL
> =could= make such extension quite easy.

It *could*, but I seriously doubt that it *would*.

Cheers,

David

P.S. Let's just say if too many more months go by,
I'm going to have to hire a real carpenter. :-(

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David W. Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com

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