Subject: Re: Examine "Saved" IDL procedures now too!
Posted by R.Bauer on Wed, 27 Mar 2002 11:28:57 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

David Fanning wrote:
>
> Paul van Delst (paul.vandelst@noaa.gov) writes:
>
>> All the above is purely my badly informed personal opinion. :o)
>
> I haven't weighted in on this yet because--Lord knows--I
> keep a high enough profile around here and I've learned that
> it almost never does me any good to take a stand on a
> controversial issue. But I've been getting some private
> e-mail wondering what I think about all of this, so I thought
> I should come public.
>
> I've known that Craig has had the ability to re-constitute
> IDL save files into procedures and functions for some
> time now. But I'm sorry he made the news public. I've
> known Craig for a long time through this newsgroup and
> via e-mail. He has always been the most ethical and
> positive person with respect to RSI. (His only quirk, as
> far as I know, is holding on to a copy of IDL 4.0.) I'm
> certain he has his reasons for making this announcement
> and releasing information regarding IDL save files. I
> haven't talked to him about this, nor do I know what
> his reasons are.
>
> I am not one of those IDL consultants who is affected
> by this decision. I was a long and early advocate of
> open software, primarily because I first saw it (when
> I worked for RSI) as an opportunity to sell more software,
> and later because it enabled me to sell more books and
> consulting, which is where the real money comes from,
> such as it is. I've never sold a single IDL save file
> in the 10+ years I've been doing this kind of work.
>
> But I have to admit when I read the announcement the
> other day I was awfully conflicted. One the one hand
> I can see the value of being able to open up IDL save
> files. On the other hand, those folks who wrote ENVI
> have done some amazing work. I think they deserve to
> have that work proprietary, if that is what they want.
> I know I'm always annoyed to learn that someone is
> photocopying my book. It happens, I know. But it is
> stealing--if that is not too harsh a word--someone's
> intellectual toil, too. (I seem to have a similar

> conversation every month or so with my children with
> regard to music available on the Internet. Yes, someone
> always seems to get obscenely rich when they only know
> three chords, but it is intellectual property all the
> same.)
>
> So, when the announcement was made I felt so badly
> I didn't even go download the darn thing. It took
> me three days to get over my ethical qualms about
> really wanting to have a peak at a couple of things
> in ENVI. By then, of course, the critical piece of
> software had been removed. I've made several discrete
> inquiries about whether someone or other had it, but
> honestly, I can't find anyone who has downloaded it.
> I'm not sure what that has to say about our little
> community, but it cheers me up nonetheless.
>
> No one, as far as I know, thought the IDL save file
> format was the 128-bit encryption method to beat all
> others. It was just a convenient way to keep a couple
> of things to yourself. I'm sorry to see it compromised.
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> --
> David W. Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting
> Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
> Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Dear David,

we all do like or love IDL very much and I think we always like to pay money for it.

If you spent lot's of time solving problems by programming in IDL you will become closer and closer to internals. Some of us in this group may be more experts as some people which sells the software. A lot of our input is recognized as feature request and are included in newer versions. This all is good for us and for the products of idl.

But where are the limits?!

A well written routine needs no comments it tells all itself

and in some cases the names of the routines and
the parameter list tells enough about what it is doing
and how it is to use.
(I won't tell here more about official routines which reads
out all this information from a sav routine without source)

Should all of this be terrible coded?

Before the posting of Craig I was never thinking about that's the
procedure SAV file Format and the data SAV File format are the
same family.
This is a good understandable reason why the data format
was not described.
I don't have this critical code and I am not interested in getting it
and I don't spend time to program such a thing.

But I believe no one could prohibite someone to do it for himself.
The publishing of this could be a problem.

Reimar
--
Reimar Bauer

Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-I)
Forschungszentrum Juelich
email: R.Bauer@fz-juelich.de