

trouble writes:

> </shameless plug for own code>
>
> Gents, please. We all know you're really clever.

Alright, I'll rise to this bait. Here are five reasons I prefer to have the experts on this newsgroup blow their own horns:

1. The programs they tout are (nearly always) better than comparable routines that come with IDL. This is especially so with Craig's mathematical routines, IMHO.
2. Their programs almost always address shortcomings or weaknesses in IDL routines. For example, Liam's `IMGDISP` is a much better image display routine than `TV`, for all kinds of reasons (you don't have to know the decomposed setting of your device, it works identically on your display and in PostScript, it works with `!P.MULTI`, etc., etc.).
3. The advice is (almost always) motivated by experience, not hype. I've never seen an acknowledged IDL expert advocate the GUI Builder here, for example. Even when the advice *is* motivated by self-aggrandizement (I've noticed some of this in my own posts, particularly), the advice is always free and it is easy to tell when it is worth as much as it costs.
4. The experts don't *have* to hang out here. Lord knows they are not getting rich answering all the questions they answer. Putting up with the occasional shameless plug is a small price to pay for having them here and available to us. I wish they got *more* acknowledgement for their significant contributions, not less. (And I want to mention especially how much I appreciate Karl Shultz's contributions to this newsgroup. I wish we had more of this from RSI.)
5. Sometimes you have to say the same thing over

and over again before people hear it. I offer the
10 million Google references to the phrase
"Device, Decomposed=0" as evidence.

And I offer one bonus reason. The IDL newsgroup
experts really **are** clever. New and experienced
users alike can learn more about IDL by following
the links to their (possibly over-hyped) programs then
they will ever learn by reading the iTools User Guide.

Cheers,

David

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