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Subject: Re: Object boundaries

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2004 21:54:21 GMT

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David Fanning wrote:

> Michael Wallace writes:

>

>

>> As I continue my IDL education, I see more and more that IDL is a

>> \*product\* rather than a \*programming language\*.

>

>

> I think the original concept was a "programming language  
> for scientists". Which meant, I suppose, a dumbed down  
> language, maybe part "product" and part "language" if you  
> like. But certainly just that part of a language scientists  
> could be expected to know (or learn in a relatively short  
> time).

>

> I'm not sure where IDL is going now. I have heard of  
> people outside of RSI writing programs with iTools,  
> but they have spent the past six months writing their  
> own documentation so they can figure it out. I'm pretty  
> sure no "scientist" is going to program in iTools (or  
> object graphics either, for that matter), so  
> I presume the concept now is "tools for scientists".

Hmm. I think "toolbox for scientists' graduate students" is more accurate. ;o) All the bits and pieces are there.. which you can hand off to your grad student (or freshly minted Masters grad now working for a contractor :o) and ask him/her to make pretty pictures for the next budget review/conference meeting/paper. For people that aren't into programming, the IDL object stuff is too complicated, or too slow/unresponsive (via the various iTools).

I am quite boggled by the fact that people are still having to futz with tick mark objects (or whatever) in creating plots.

> I think the jury is still out on whether this will  
> be a successful strategy in the long run, but I'm not  
> too excited about it in the near term. :-(

I'll second that.

But, just in case people think I'm being overly crotchety, I still haven't found a peer to the simplicity of reading in and direct-graphics PLOT-ing data in IDL. At least in Linux. Dunno about Windows (although there is this company in Golden, CO that makes a \*sweet\* suite of windows-based graphics tools, Grapher/Surfer, etc.).

paulv

- > P.S. Have you ever wondered if it's just the Luddites
- > who hang out here on this newsgroup. :-)

We're the only ones who need the help as we're dragged kicking and screaming into the world of objects, no? :o)

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