
Subject: Re: Linux Question

Posted by [Nigel Wade](#) on Mon, 21 Feb 2005 09:40:50 GMT

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Jonathan Greenberg wrote:

> So I have to say I've actually been VERY surprised with how quick RSI is
> to
> respond -- I've seen bug reports I've submitted get seriously considered
> and
> folded into future releases. I should point out I work mostly with ENVI,
> using IDL to support remote sensing work. Most of the features have been
> remote sensing related, which begs the question of whether RSI has a big
> difference in their IDL techs and their ENVI techs.
>
> David: you are the expert on IDL, one thing I haven't figured out is what
> does IDL have that Matlab/Octave doesn't?

Direct graphics. Everything in MATLAB is an "object". When you plot millions of little blocks, every block is an "object" containing its coordinates, the fill colour, the fill style, the outline colour, the outline style etc. The overhead is enormous.

The ability to work with non-double-precision numbers. Whilst MATLAB allows you to create matrices containing non-DP numbers, you can't actually do anything with them. Try adding 1 to one for example - result "that operation is not supported".

A draconian licensing model. IDL requires 1 license per user per host. That user can run any number of IDL sessions on the same host and requires only 1 license. MATLAB requires 1 license per invocation.

MATLAB comes as a pretty bare installation. If you want any functionality to get some real work done you are going to have to cough up additional money for some toolboxes.

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