Robi wrote:

> Reimar Bauer wrote:
>> What is an idl expert? We all do learn new things every day. You
> should
>> think on explaination how to write functions to the users instead of
> always
>> do all in the idl commandline. It is much easier to use a function as
> to
>> write all the code into the command line everytime it is needed or
> recall
>
> Hi Reimar,
>
> For someone to show up at an observatory who might have never seen IDL
> and yet wants to look at a spectrum coming from the telescope in a
> timely fashion, I think it would be safe to say (as a longtime user of
> IDLWAVE) that the user is not looking for an hour-long tutorial on
> IDLWAVE before actually running the IDL code. Worse, who died and made
> emacs the required editor for an observer to use? I'm afraid I'll just
> have to disagree with your assessment of the relative ease of packing
> commands into functions or procedures, compiling them and calling them
> rather than calling a module that does one specific task at the command
> line when you are INTERACTING with your DATA in this LANGUAGE.

Hi Tim,

we were caught 10 years ago in the same situation. A few amount of us starts
to write routines and sometimes later we have build up dependend on this
routines the first internal lessons for all the idl users of our
department. This was mostly about using self written routines for common
problems each user has. We did five lessons about 90 minutes in a computer
room showing people that it is possible to extend the idl language by user
written routines. It was an interactive course with 19 colleagues are
willing to learn on 12 computers. Later on this was repeated always showing
new stuff or more elegant ways to solve the common problems. This was the
time were the library of ICG was born too. Sometime later we recognized
that's only idl is necessary and user written code of course to do anything
we want with the data. The library grows up and standards were defined e.g.
the icg-data-structure, how to make time series analyses and so on

Now and always since 1994 it was possible for each of my colleagues who is
interested in idl to get an idl excercise lesson on ForschungsZentrum
Jï¿œlich over three days. The lesson is for beginners with no programming

acknowledgment. There were a lot of people willing to go three days to this excercise too.

The interaction with data in this language on the IDL> Prompt is always done to tryout something or to test different things but then mostly an available routine gets an extension or a new routine is build.

I agree to you that it will take time to build functions and procedure from things you long time have done interactive. But it takes almost longer if you still waiting to do it. Probably you could start with main programs. After running one you have access to all variables too. Or with procedures were you define all parameters you want to return in the parameter list. If you start it does not matter if the code does not look pretty excellent. It should only do the thing you want it to do.

While Ken gaves advertices for the recall buffer I just want to show here only that we were in a similiar situation in the past and how much effort you and your colleagues have if all could speak the same foreigner language. ;-)

cheers

Reimar

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 == ======
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