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Subject: Re: About ION's Applications

Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Fri, 16 Sep 2005 18:36:07 GMT

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tina wrote:

- > I can seach many applications of IDL but few of ION on net.
- > I want to know if ION is a popular product in USA?
- > If it is popular, can anyone give me some website links of application
- > cases on ION.

I would contact RSI directly regarding this. I also would send you a link to the applications I built using ION script but they are currently offline and I don't know if or when they will be back.

I can give you a verbal rundown of one to give you an idea of what is possible with ION script:

The user would launch the application by clicking a link in their browser. The app presented two windows, one for control and one for display. In the control window there was a web form which would allow the user to specify a number of parameters and they could select how they wanted the results displayed: as an jpg image of the 3d model or as a VRML model. If they selected VRML model (and they had a VRML client installed), the application would send the VRML file and their browser would open the client in the display window and they could then manipulate the model (rotate, pan, zoom, etc.).

Overall it worked, but we ran into a number of annoying problems with the VRML models. For instance there were z-order issues with certain objects and transparency and texturing were hit-or-miss depending on a myriad of factors like VRML client, 3d drivers, OS...

While it worked, it really was a sub-optimal way to share 3d content. This isn't a limitation of ION, but of the VRML standard.

- > and further can you tell me the difference between VRML and ION ?
- > If I want to publish IDL 3D applications, which one is the better?

VRML is an almost dead open format for describing 3d objects/scenes. VRML has evolved into X3d and while there seems to be more support for this format, time will tell. There are a lot of limitations with VRML and IDL only supports output to VRML, not X3d.

ION (and ION script) are packages that allow you to leverage your IDL code to build online applications. With ION you can create VRML files (using IDL's IDLgrVRML object).

As to how to publish your 3d "application"? It really depends. If you want to share it with the world, and you are creating it in IDL, then VRML is probably your only option. But, if you want to share it within a smaller community I would build the application and then share it as a .sav file and encourage your colleagues to download the IDL virtual machine. You will have much more control over the content and presentation and will be limited only by IDL, not by the outdated VRML standard.

-Rick

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