Subject: Re: Introducing FL
Posted by Paul Van Delst[1] on Tue, 04 Apr 2006 12:23:43 GMT

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Y.T. wrote:
> Craig Markwardt wrote:
> [good stuff mercilessly snipped]
>
>> True, but that's kind of my point. *If* we could easily translate all
>> our IDL code to Python (say), we'd have the immediate benefit of a
>> stable and supported runtime environment, where the wheel had already
>
>
>
> You're aware of PyDL, aren't you?
>
> Speaking only for myself, I write stuff in IDL because I know IDL.
> That's all. That's where my "inertia" comes from. A converter that
> would produce perfect python from my IDL routines would be worthless to
> me.
>
> At my place of employ I can get Matlab for free (i.e. site-license) but
> I'd be horribly worthless with Matlab because I'd be spending my time
> re-re-relearning when and where to place a comma or a semicolon and
> what was the syntax for a linear fit again? So I use GDL, because that
> allows me to get something *done*. As in *now*.

That, of course, is very important but....
>
> (I work for a federally funded research facility and you, the
> tax-payer, are expending my salary. Do you really think you're getting
> your money's worth out of the deal if I spend my time learning this
> years fad-language?)

Yes, actually (being a taxpayer who also happens to work at a federally funded research
facility). Learning new programming languages is not unlike learning new spoken languages
(except easier IMO). It broadens one's horizon to make different solution methodologies
available. In some cases they may help your work, others not. I would be a foolish
taxpayer if I expected you to not expend time learning new stuff that may make your job
easier and more efficient. And, of course, there's the "personal improvement" aspect -- ya
gotta be happy at what you do. :o)

paulv

p.s. I would love to get a matlab site license - even though I barely know enough matlab
for the "hello world" chestnut. Until then, learning Ruby and Python while I wait for
Fortran2003 compilers will have to do. :o)

--
Paul van Delst
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