I'm not a Matlab user, but a while back I spent some time looking at
the documentation for the Matlab handle graphics suite. It really looks
very simple, straightforward, and powerful. It is designed to be driven
from the command line. If someone could write a graphics library for
IDL which emulated the Matlab handle graphics suite, I think they would
gain eternal fame.

Here's some more information:
 http://www.mathworks.com/access/helpdesk/help/techdoc/creati ng_plots/hg_objec.html#27602

Cheers,
Liam.
Practical IDL Programming
http://www.gumley.com/

Cliff wrote:
> In the beginning I used add ons to Fortran to visualise my data, so
> when I came across PV-WAVE it was like a miracle appearing on my
> desktop. Then came IDL, widgets, pointers etc etc. I was a happy
> plotter. I started to write applications and soon found direct graphics
> a little clunky. Then came objects - much more like it and I was a
> anticipative plotter. Then came object graphics, oops, it was like the
> wind was knocked from my sails. Why oh why are they so complicated?
> Then I found MATLAB, this is how graphics should work. Make a plot and
> you have a functional oo plotting system - like LIVE_PLOT on acid. I
> jumped with joy in anticipation when I heard of the arrival of iTools.
> Ooops, why oh why oh why? Complicated, indecipherable and unusable
> unless of course one has a spare month or two for the learning curve
> (my boss would not be happy). Suppose I'll have to carry on using DGs
> for my applications. Am I just dim? It's not like I'm an IDL novice.
> Does anyone else feel this way? oh and why can't object methods be used
> as widget events. Moan over ...