Subject: Re: IDL & iTools used as post-processor for other commercial software
Posted by news.qwest.net on Tue, 03 Oct 2006 15:38:06 GMT
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I (personally in my academic work) find no need for interactive graphics.
I always use main level scripts and direct graphics to create postscript
files.
These scripts read in the data, do the necessary processing, and create the
final manuscript-ready portable scalable postscript graphics file.

There are a couple of reasons for this:
1) It is reproducible. I will need to adjust the figure and perhaps
modifiy the analysis in the future. Basically I will get reviews
from a journal that suggests some minor change, and I can
implement it instantly. Another example, I actually had some boob
of a reviewer state that one of my figures was not possible (it was
too clean and nice of a result). My scathing response included the
entire package of code and data that would have let the reviewer
create the figure. (You like apples? How do you like those apples?!?
I am still seething over that one.)
1a) try to reproduce a figure from an interactive 12 hour long odyssey
of tweak and toggle. I think I can mathematically prove that each resulting
figure is unique. Applying the 3rd Law of Publications "the most difficult
figure to reproduce will be the one requiring modification", then it could
be
a problem. :(

2) simple yet powerful. Ok, direct graphics may seem a bit complicated
to newbies, with the thousands of keywords etc. But if you have had some
experience you can pretty much do anything you want. And since 99% of
my code is cut-and-pasted from previous code, development of a final
figure is very rapid.

3) quasi-interactive. I actually think I can update the image faster with
the script/direct-graphics approach than I can in Itools. In WinXP,
just type in the modifications in the editor, a subconcious CTRL-S
CTRL-R CTRL-F5 F5 (I had to look it up, since the memory of those
keys is stored in my hands) and it is done.

4) I have a large suite of functions to do exactly what I want,
and I have not been motivated to port them to Itools, or to find out if such
a thing is possible. One example is all my julian day manipulation functions
(combined with xtickformat, xrange, etc).

5) woof woof snore.... i'm an old dog. :)

Cheers,
bob