
Subject: Re: New IDL Prices!

Posted by [thompson](#) on Sat, 05 Sep 1992 20:52:00 GMT

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In article <15318@umd5.umd.edu>, paul@astro.umd.edu (Paul Butler) writes...

> I have just heard that IDL is raising prices to PV Wave levels!

> Unlimited access on a single CPU is going up to \$15k

> Single access on a single CPU is going to \$3k

>

> I hope this is not true. Such a pricing policy could

> relegate IDL to the high end specialty market. Given

> IDL is already developed, it would make sense to attempt

> to make IDL a wide spread data analysis and visualization

> standard. If this new pricing policy is true, it seems

> that IDL's market share will contract rather than expand.

> This can not be good for the long run.

Hear, hear!

Unfortunately, it is true. RSI's current policy seems to decouple the cost of IDL from the class of machine it's running on. This seems to be a highly unusual pricing strategy for a high end software product.

IDL does do a lot more than it used to, and it does seem to be going through a period of expansion of capabilities. In that sense, maybe the prices aren't all that unreasonable when applied to the highest end platforms. However, one should expect to spend less for IDL on more modest platforms.

The new pricing policy will particularly hurt in two areas:

1. As workstations get cheaper and cheaper, the price of a single-user IDL license starts getting close to the cost of the machine itself.
2. When people who have already bought IDL in the past under the old pricing agreement upgrade to new platforms, they will have to pay the difference between the old and new prices as an upgrade fee. With the prices so much different, this could be a substantial amount of money.

The price of IDL is about 50% higher than I would expect to pay for the platforms that I use. This also goes for IDL for Windows--I fully expected that to come in for less than \$1000. Of course there are generous discounts when buying multiple copies, but that isn't always possible or practical to arrange.

I would like to stress that this represents my opinion only. I do not speak for anybody but myself, in particular I do not speak for the NASA Goddard Space FLight Center, or the Laboratory for Astronomy and Solar Physics.

Bill Thompson
