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Subject: Re: Hello again, and iTools

Posted by [Kenneth Bowman](#) on Thu, 08 Mar 2007 17:14:35 GMT

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In article <1173356728.109425.13470@q40g2000cwq.googlegroups.com>, struangray@cantab.net wrote:

> In short: are the iTools stable, usable and extendable enough to make  
> it worth my while to learn the whole application framework? Are there  
> any bugs or gotchas that will bite me if I try to build an application  
> more substantial than simple data viewers on top of the iTools base  
> layer? I like the provided viewers, but have found a few bugs down  
> among the details, and I am not yet convinced they are worth the  
> commitment. I can bang together a basic program from my old widgets  
> in short order, but most of what I am currently writing will be used  
> by non-programmers later, and it seems as if a program built around  
> iTools will be safer in the long run.

The iTools can be very frustrating (David has pointed out some of the problems), but I have to say that I can do things with iTools that I would not be able to do otherwise. A couple of examples:

1. With very high-resolution time series data, I can interactively zoom in on the data to subjectively identify points of interest. This saved me a good deal of time.
2. I can make rather complex 3-D visualizations and view them interactively.

[http://csrp.tamu.edu/hiaper/archive/goes\\_o3.png](http://csrp.tamu.edu/hiaper/archive/goes_o3.png)

I can also make movies of rotating 3-D graphics.

[http://csrp.tamu.edu/hiaper/archive/PV1\\_surface\\_b.mov.zip](http://csrp.tamu.edu/hiaper/archive/PV1_surface_b.mov.zip)

These were not trivial to make using iTools, but I think it would have been virtually impossible using direct graphics.

3. I can easily save a visualization and send it to colleague so that they can play around with it interactively.

The main issue that I have with iTools at present is that I have been completely unable to make any Postscript out. Fortunately, I have a really large monitor and can capture big bitmaps.

The documentation is very obscure, which leads to a lot of frustrating trial and error.

