Subject: Re: Question about selecting images from Draw Widgets
Posted by Rick Towler on Mon, 19 Mar 2007 20:27:01 GMT

David Fanning wrote:
> gearoid.k@gmail.com writes:
>
>> So do you suggest that I work solely on the .pro file? And to forget
>> about the .prc file and the eventCallBack file?
>
> I suggest only that if you are going to go to all
> the trouble of writing a program, at least write
> a program you can read and understand. The GUI Builder
> builds GUIs. That is very different then writing
> programs with a GUI interface. My thoughts on this
> topic are well known:
>
>   http://www.dfanning.com/widget_tips/gui_builder.html
>
> (I will caution that article is fairly old now, and
> things have improved slightly since then. But the article
> is still accurate enough, I think, to make a valid point.)

I used to agree with this, David, but this was when I had all the time
in the world to program away and spending a couple of days tweaking a
GUI interface I built by hand wasn't a problem. Two things have
changed. These days I don't have the luxury of time and my users are
demand more and more sophisticated interfaces to their applications. I
regularly build GUI's in Visual Studio and MATLAB and have just started
working with IDL's GUI builder after years of shunning it. I think the
most egregious GUI builder offenses have been addressed. That being
said, it isn't perfect.

We do agree that the lack of an formal method for passing information
around is a real problem and is probably the biggest obstacle to new
users. MATLAB's approach is to create and provide this parameter for
you as the "handles" structure. I think IDL needs to build this in as
part of their GUI builder paradigm. I would like to see some other
changes as well but most of my ideas are half-baked at that and I
wouldn't want to embarrass myself. But I think it is important that
instead of urging people not to use it, that we should urge people *to*
use it and provide feedback to ITT so we can move out of the GUI stone age.

In the end, building applications with a decent GUI is hard work whether
using the GUI builder or doing it the hard way but I think with a proper
GUI builder we'll end up ahead more often than not.

-Rick