
Subject: Re: Compiling IDL ... ever likey ?
Posted by [Ken Knighton](#) on Tue, 23 Jan 1996 08:00:00 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

zawodny@arbd0.larc.nasa.gov (Joseph M Zawodny) wrote:

> In article <4e0m1n\$k1@rosebud.sdsc.edu> Ken Knighton <knighton@gav.gat.com> writes:

>>

>> On the subject of compiling IDL, I thought I would just throw a little
>> gasoline on the fire and see what happens:

>>

>> Languages that compile to the host machine level are rapidly becoming
>> obsolete ...

>

> Yes, but I cannot write a useful (marketable) program with IDL and sell
> it for 39.95 without making the buyer also spend \$1500 to buy IDL first!

But what's in it for RSI? If you are going to make all of the money, perhaps you should hire some
compiler writers to reproduce IDL=

as was done for DBASE. Then you could sell the compiler and your 39.95 programs, and not
have to worry about it.

Or, you could just go out and buy DELPHI, Borland C++, and some graphics class libraries and
away you go. Or you can buy Visual Bas=

ic and pay a small royalty for run-time licenses and make Bill "Kneel before me" Gates a little bit
richer. This is in fact what I =

am advocating for IDL. RSI already sells run-time only licenses, but I don't think they have
targeted mass market applications that=

sell for small amounts of money. As I said in my previous post, it would be nice to be able to buy
very cheap run-time licenses fo=
r Macs and PCs.

> I think that with some subset of IDL features, one could eliminate the
> command interpreter stage and go directly to an efficient compiled
> executable. As noted in a previous post, that might require being more
> rigorous with the use of variable types.

I think that anything can be done with enough money and skilled man-power.

>> While I agree with any agruement that gets the cost of IDL down:

> Even if IDL cost \$299.95, there would have to be a plethora of desiraeable
> applications out there to warrant the initial cost of the interpreter.

I suspect that if one could buy the IDL run-time system for 10-20% of the gross sales of a product
written in IDL, then it would be =

economically feasible to sell mass market applications written in IDL. Actually, this may be
available since RSI already sells run-=
time system licenses.

Ken Knighton
General Atomics
San Diego, CA

knighton@gav.gat.com knighton@cts.com
