
Subject: Re: Why Persist with the IDL Workbench
Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Tue, 01 Apr 2008 20:56:29 GMT
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On Apr 1, 1:50 pm, Paul van Delst <Paul.vanDe...@noaa.gov> wrote:
> Forgive my obtuseness, but remind me again what *extra* this Workbench thingy delivers?

Well, compared to Emacs + idlwave mode? I'm not sure if anything has more features over that. But I would say the Workbench is a more accessible to the new user.

>> I like the Outline view. Makes it easy to navigate through
>> your file.
>
> I don't use ctags with my editor, but that sounds like the same thing (would be nice in my
> editor I'll admit) From what I understand, emacs does that quite well also (I've seen
> people do things editing ruby source in emacs that blew me away)

I've found ctags to be a bit of a pain to setup, but yes it's basically the same thing.

>> I like the way the Project Explorer makes all my files easily
>> accessible to me.
>
> If by easily accessible you mean a dialogue opens up (ala pickfile()) allowing one to
> browse a directory tree, again that's available in most editors nowadays.

It's one thing to request to see something and another to have something that is always there to browse through. I find the Project Explorer provides context that helps me situate myself in a project, whereas a popup dialog does not. Combined with the outline view, I can easily see the context of a routine's surroundings, get an overview of the entire project, etc.

> And, all the above applies to whatever file I'm editing (f95, idl, ruby, html, latex,
> etc...) I can also run system commands in my editor.. and even write my own macros (or
> download those from others) to do additional schneato things.

There are plugins for other languages and tools that can be installed for the Workbench as well.

> I guess the debug capabilities of the Workbench must kick ass. My "integrated debug"
> environment is another window where I have a debugger running, or debug output sent
> (except for IDL, of course. No external debugger). Works fine.

I regularly got myself into trouble when debugging with idlwave mode. Debugging is one of the main tasks I use the Workbench for.

> I guess my OS is my dream IDE. Infinitely customizable and portable across languages. :o)

I agree there is no replacing the flexibility and power of the Unix command line for many tasks. I just like the Workbench for some tasks.

> I reckon it's asking too much of single piece of software to be everything including the
> kitchen sink. Just my opinion, of course.

I agree that the Workbench doesn't solve all problems for all people. And since there is a reasonable DE on Unix and a command line for Windows now, everyone has choices.

Mike

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