
Subject: Re: New Widgets Needed

Posted by [Rick Towler](#) on Thu, 30 Oct 2008 22:12:16 GMT

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Paul van Delst wrote:

> David Fanning wrote:

>> Paul van Delst writes:

>>

>>> Hmm. Given the direction that "updating" the graphics capabilities

>>> has gone (i.e. direct to object) I'm apprehensive at the thought of

>>> the same thing happening to widgets.

>>

>> Yes, you are probably right to worry about this. I wouldn't

>> say I had a great deal of faith, either. But, on the bright

>> side, tying the new widgets to iTools would probably really

>> spur the development of that Next New Thing in somebody's

>> garage that will replace IDL. :-)

>>

>> Cheers,

>>

>> David

>>

>> P.S. MatLab must have it's own problems, or there would

>> probably be more defections. Any thoughts on that? As a

>> retired person, I'm ready to explore more options than

>> I used to be. :-)

>

> matlab has its issues too. I have some opinions on that but, being (for

> now) a cursory matlab user, I'll keep 'em to myself.

Two things that even casual users find difficult to swallow are the cost and the fact that you can't pass by reference. You think you're paying a lot for IDL... And yeah, eclipse isn't the lightest process on the block but to really work with even moderate data sets in MATLAB requires a 64 bit platform and *lots* of RAM. Your recent upgrade, David, was nothing.

Mathworks does do a couple of things right:

First and foremost their website and "MATLAB central" community are top notch. They provide <gasps> a very fast and functional interface to the *USENET* MATLAB newsgroup. ITTVIS marketing needs to do their research.

The other is their "figure" windows. They are what iTools should have been.

> I actually think that the idea of IDL object graphics, and IDL OO stuff
> in general is great. It's just the execution of the idea that has caused

- > the suffering and gnashing of teeth. The IDL OG stuff has the
- > "everything including the kitchen sink" smell to it that makes doing
- > stuff more difficult. I fear the same approach will be taken with any
- > new widget stuff.

I don't think the issue is that there are too many features, it is that the intermediate routines that would have replaced the DG surface, plot, xyouts and other functions never materialized. I'm not talking iTools, just classes that are as close to the original functions as possible that provide an easy and comfortable migration route. I should be able to, in a single line, create a plot in OG with axes, titles, etc. and have it displayed properly in a window. Isn't that "The IDL way"(tm)? Currently that would take 10 lines or more.

Remember: iTools ~= OG

-Rick
