
Subject: Re: CDAT

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 13 Oct 2009 20:43:25 GMT

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Paolo writes:

- > Hi all - in the September 1, 2009 edition of EOS, the American
- > Geophysical Union (AGU) journal, an article presented software
- > called "climate data analysis tools" (CDAT) - written in *python*.
- >
- > That inspired a few questions to me...
- >
- > Is the climate community running away from IDL/ENVI?
- > Or did they never cared much for it anyway? (I am not that
- > familiar with the field myself).
- > A sign of things to come? Will other disciplines follow?

The climate community is similar to a lot of other science communities: they like cheap (read "free") software that they can waste hours and hours of graduate student time on to make a simple plot. Having worked in such a community for some time now, I am more sympathetic than I used to be. There are LOTS of good, free software programs out there (proj4 map projections, ImageMagick, etc.) and we should take advantage of them.

The alternative, of course, is to pay big bucks for commercial software that does (much of the time) save you time and money because it actually works. The downside is having to come up with increasingly scarce maintenance dollars for more geegaws you will probably never use. :-(

Personally, IDL is not the be-all and end-all it used to be for me. But it is still, at its core, a damn fine piece of software for doing climate or any other kind of science.

Cheers,

David
