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Subject: Re: Migrate away from idl?

Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Wed, 18 Nov 2009 23:56:28 GMT

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I used Python/PyQt/matplotlib/TVTK a couple years ago for a project. Things may (probably) have changed as I have only used Python to do shell scripting type things since then.

Brian Larsen wrote:

- > Sames:

- > array based  $a = a+1$  for arrays

- > multiplatform

- > command line to test things out

I would give Python's IPython command line a significant edge over IDL's

- > all the same plots are there (or at least all I do)

- > +idl:

- > I already know it

- > code library that I am familiar with

- > Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming

- \* you get more scientific functionality with a base IDL install, to get Python up to the equivalent of IDL for scientific programming requires a lot of 3rd party packages (some of which are a pain to build, i.e., I'm looking at you VTK); even worse is getting something that your clients/customers can install on their systems

- > +python:

- > no licensing fee

- > easier scriptable (like into web pages etc)

- > interactive plots that make iplot look like 1980

- > super easy export of plots to png, pdf, ps whatever even interactively

- > from the plot

- > seems like its up and coming

- \* more 3rd party package options, especially if not all your work is "scientific"

- \* bigger/more participatory user community, even just in the scientific Python community

Mike

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