Subject: Re: Migrate away from idl?
Posted by David Fanning on Tue, 24 Nov 2009 02:34:40 GMT

Alain writes:

> However, IDL has some firm basis and still appears to be a solid
> construct for scientists. I am afraid that many of us might be leaving
> IDL, being appealed by more recent and seducting tools, whose future
> is, in my opinion, not really guaranteed.

Thanks for this post. I mostly feel this way, too. I've
always believed you pretty much get what you pay for,
but many open source software projects are changing my
mind. (I'm not sure what I would do without ImageMagick
and Putty.)

What really concerns me, though, is how seriously I am
taking this Python suggestion. I've downloaded the xypython
distribution recommended by Mike Galloy, and my Python book
arrived today from Amazon. I plan to spend some time over
the holidays looking into it.

Any even more disconcerting is the fact I am not alone.
Today, completely unprompted by me, a colleague who I
consider a die-hard IDL user told me she was thinking
about learning Python so she could ditch partial solutions
like IDL and Perl. If we can figure out a way to use proj.4
and GDAL to do our map projections, we will probably both
dump IDL.

IDL is at significant risk, it seems to me, of losing people
who should be its core supporters. It would be a shame to
see that happen.

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com/
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")