Folks,

I was just sitting here thinking about the new
graphics and the future of IDL. I am currently
heavily invested in seeing IDL succeed, but I'm
feeling more than a little discouraged this morning.

Clearly, the syntax and style of the new graphics
is a step in the right direction. And, just as
clearly, the implementation of the new graphics
objects is far too complex and complicated for anyone
(including, I'm afraid, anyone at ITTVIS) to
program successfully.

It seems to me that what is needed is a simple, object
graphics system that looks a LOT more like direct
graphics, with maybe a couple of bonus features like
the ability to save a graphic object thrown in.

I'm wondering if the tools aren't available now to
build a simple object graphics system. And I am
wondering if this isn't something the IDL community
could take on as an open source project.

I think building the actual graphics objects would
be simple enough. I envision something similar to
MPI_Plot, but done in object graphics. There you
simply have two axis objects and a plot object.
Each object has a "property sheet" that you can
use to change the object's properties. Simple, but
powerful, too.

The main thing, I think, is creating some kind of
object DISPLAY class that can manage where graphics
appear on output. They have to acquire the graphic
object's view hierarchy, and then scale and translate
it to the proper output location. This seems to me
to be the most complicated bit, but I'm thinking it
might be possible to write it now.

I don't know. Anyone have any ideas about this?
I'm convinced there must be a better, simpler way
to obtain outstanding graphical output that normal
IDL programmers can write and understand.

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.")