
Subject: Re: Good programming practices and commercial development with IDL
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 22 Oct 2010 15:13:16 GMT

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David Fanning writes:

> I don't find this argument compelling, especially
> when it comes to high-end software. I think people making
> these kinds of decisions *weigh* price, but I don't think
> it is their most important criteria. Support, I would
> think, is MUCH more important to them.

Just to give a personal example. I don't care how much IDL cost me. It does what I want it to do, and I like it a lot. It is a great general purpose scientific programming language.

What pushes me in the direction of Python is shelling out generally small (but increasing!) amounts of money year after year in support costs without getting anything significantly meaningful to me in return.

I'm happy to see the direction IDL graphics are going in, for example, but I'm not happy about spending my time debugging them (with crippled debugging tools, I might add!). I would be a great deal happier, however, if some of the numerous bug reports I have submitted over the years were addressed. I mean, really, how hard is it to make NLEVELS actually produce N levels in a contour plot! Or make TV smart enough to know the difference between an 8-bit display and a 24-bit display, or a 2D image and a 24-bit image!

Hell, hire an old guy and turn him loose on this old stuff that people actually use every day. That would make a lot of people happy. :-)

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.")
