Subject: Re: Ready to quit after 25 years...
Posted by Michael Galloy on Fri, 08 Jul 2011 19:33:35 GMT
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On 7/8/11 10:58 AM, Haje Korth wrote:
> Hi Bob,
> no doubt the response from Chris and colleagues to arising issues is
> superb and prompt. Communication has significantly improved under the
> ITT umbrella and cannot be compared to the KODAK firewall I tried to
> climb over unsuccessfully most of the time (Thanks to Ali Bahrami for
> opening a back door here and there).

I agree.

> The issues I am having is that all the information on the new graphics
> system (NG) I absorb from the forum should be available via the IDL
> documentation in absence of third party books. In the past i went to
> David's book where the help was insufficient. I was desperately
> waiting for him to publish a book on the matter, but I gather from the
> forum he does not believe in it presumably due to lack in flexibility.
> Mike's new book is great but the 15-page NG chapter is not
> comprehensive enough to fill the holes I have in using the system. To
> my knowledge no other books exist describing NG. My lack of knowledge
> combined with the inability to fill it, results presently in regular
> outbursts of anger. :-)

Yes, I agree that I don't have enough NG information in the book to
describe it sufficiently to switch to it for daily tasks, but I am stuck
in a similar situation as iTools: the information is not documented yet.
I could provide some extra routines, hacks, and examples that workaround
some of the limitations of the current new graphics, but the next
version of IDL would probably change them drastically.

I originally had a chapter on developing with the iTools in the book,
but between writing the examples and writing the text of the chapter a
new version or two of IDL came out and my examples no longer worked (and
that was sticking to the *documented* interface which was certainly not
adequate to begin with)! I didn't want to get in the same position with
iTool's offspring, NG.

And while I'm complaining about the docs (which I consider to be a
strength of IDL's, by the way), are we going to get the full set of
documentation in the online help browser again? I really miss the
External Development Guide.

I did see a positive change in the docs recently. While Googling for one
of the ENVI routines (I think, ENVI_OPEN_FILE), the first hit was the
PDF of the ENVI Programming Guide on ITT VIS' own website! It was the

PDF, not an HTML page, and I couldn't find any IDL documentation, but it's a great to see that maybe the online documentation might be put online someday! Let's hope that it wasn't an oversight for the PDF to leak out...

> Apparently some of the issues I am having are due to, let's say,
> unoptimized codes. While this is not unexpected, the present
> development cycle implies that these probably small fixes which would
> make my life easier will takes 6-12 months to reach my system. It is
> very likely that the codes I am using right now will no longer be in
> use by the time a fix becomes available. This leaves me with the
> question, whether it is actually worth bothering with the new
> technology. No, I do not think I want to know the answer. :-)

While I think the NG routines are very exciting, I can't see myself switching to them yet. I still use direct graphics for 2D graphics and hand coded object graphics for 3D graphics.

> Oh, well just my two cents, back to the pile of work in front of me...

Mike
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