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Subject: Re: Looking for general purpose image display.

Posted by [mgs](#) on Fri, 16 May 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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In article <davidf-ya023080001505972054160001@news.frii.com>, davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) wrote:

- > About the only thing we have in common is a low tolerance
- > for office politics and the idea that we can write damn good
- > IDL programs. Some of these friends of mine stay up half the
- > night after they put the kids to bed writing IDL programs
- > because they \*like\* to! And here is the thing: they could
- > probably be persuaded to neglect their health and family life
- > even more if they could just get \*paid\* for what they do.

Hi David -

I don't remember giving you rights to my life story. A year of 100 hour work weeks plays havoc with family life (try to remember when you had a life).

- > Not much. I'm not talking huge goverment salaries here, now. :-)
- > But a little. Something to make it worthwhile to them.

I'm still trying to settle down after the "Huge Government salary" line. Going from my meager living last year as a self-employed IDL programmer to a nice government job only cost me a 50% cut in pay! The ideal life for me would involve a cabin in Montana (kinda like the Unabomber's) where someone would slide an envelope of cash under the doorway every month and I'd blister a modem churning out code for them. If someone wanted to set me up in a place like the picture on Page 28 of Log Homes Illustrated '97 Annual Buyer's Directory, I'd blister an ATM line.

- > What I have been thinking about is a sort of IDL Programmers
- > Clearing House or Cooperative. Something a step or two above
- > the User Contributed Library that comes with IDL. Maybe with
- > some kind of enforced programming and documentation standards.
- > Perhaps with some kind of modest guarantee of support and help
- > to go along with the programs.

I think it's a great idea. I wrote a PV-WAVE programming standard at my last contract. No reason it couldn't be converted over to an IDL standard that a group could live with. I've also grabbed several User Contributed programs and used them directly or ported them to PV-WAVE or enhanced them beyond the original intent. No doubt in my mind I would pay for the starting point they provided. The tougher part would be to get an employer to petty cash something along those lines.

- > The question, of course, is how do the contributors get paid? I've been
- > thinking along the lines of a shareware model, where each program
- > like the image display widget Dyer is talking about would cost on the
- > order of \$25-\$30. Would you pay for it? Would you pay more?
- > Less? Would you steal it and give it away to your colleagues?
- > Would you pay \$200 for the Deluxe version?

As you allude to on many occasions in this newsgroup it would be nice to get paid for your efforts, especially when you take time away from family and efforts that are paying, to help out a fellow programmer. I used to be very prolific on this newsgroup, but had to leave the newsgroups alone when things got too hectic last year with my small business. Your priorities have to be adjustable. I wrote a few freeware programs for the comp.unix.shell newsgroup a few years back. Support for freeware can take quite a bit of time, especially when it's for UNIX.

- > I'm curious to know how this would be received in the larger IDL
- > community. I do think it would make better programs available
- > to all of us and I think it would help new users get work done
- > much faster. As we move into the IDL 5.0 world, programs
- > are going to become a lot more powerful, but they are also
- > going to require a lot more effort to write. It would be nice
- > if all of us didn't have to continually reinvent the wheel.

Exactly. OOP means less work after a long time, but more work in the initial planning stages and certainly when a language changes to support a new model. There will be a lot of new programs/modules showing up as the interest in OOP for IDL increases.

Maybe this is an opportunity to mention that Ray Sterner has passed the IDL FAQ on to me. I'll be updating and posting it some time next week. It will also have a new home on my web site temporarily and perhaps a government site in the very near future.

> David

Regards,

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Interactive Visuals  
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