Subject: Re: Looking for general purpose image display.
Posted by davidf on Thu, 15 May 1997 07:00:00 GMT

View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

Dyer Lytle <dlytle@as.arizona.edu> writes:

> I'm about to write a general purpose image display widget in IDL
> similar in functionality to SAOimage. I figure something like
> that may already have been written in IDL so I thought it best to
> query this newsgroup before I re-invent the wheel.
>
> Any leads on a general image display program?

I don't know what SAOimage does, but I do know there is a lot
of code out and about that can help build something like this.
Many of the programs on my web page were designed to show
someone how to build an application like this. (My original goal
was to teach people how to build the poor man's ENVI, if you want
to know the truth.)

Ray Sterner has some great programs on his Johns Hopkins APL
site. Be sure to have a look at XDISPLAY by Phil Williams before you
go messing around with ROI functionality. Phil probably has exactly
what you want. You can find other links to great software on
my web page.

To get off the main subject for a moment, this whole idea
of people writing and sharing generally useful programs with
each other interests me. I have had several conversations
in the past few weeks with "independent" IDL programmers
who manage to make a living (a *meager* living for those
of you who think this life may be for you!) nibbling around
the edges of RSI's business.

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.

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

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.

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?

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.

I'd like to hear your thoughts.

Cheers!

David

David Fanning, Ph.D.
Fanning Software Consulting
Customizable IDL Programming Courses
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com