
Subject: The Secret Widget Manual and IDL V5
Posted by [martin](#) on Mon, 09 Jun 1997 07:00:00 GMT
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Hi All,

A long time ago when IDL first came out with widgets, I tried to write widget programs based on the standard documentation. I was able to get my widget programs to work, but they felt kludgy. I also decided that widget programming was much harder than it was worth so I mostly stopped writing widget code.

Then as kind of a fluke I got a hold of the RSI manual called "Building Graphical User Interfaces in IDL: An Interactive Training Course". This manual was written by David Fanning and is the manual they give you if you sign up for one of their \$\$\$ training courses. This manual was great. I read it in 1 day. I never bothered to download the examples from the ftp site. Now widget programming is simple and straight forward. I use widgets all the time.

The fact that I was never even informed about the existense of this manual really annoys me. It seems as if RSI expects you to take the training course if you want to do anything but the basics in IDL. Another thing that frustrates me is that even if the training course was free, for me reading the manual was enough. I would not want to waste time traveling to and from the training site.

So now IDL version 5 is here. Many fairly sophisticated users seem to be having trouble using objects. I read the objects manual and I got the same feeling I got when I read the standard documentation on widgets. I wonder is there a training manual out there somewhere on IDL objects? If so is there a way to get that manual without taking a training course? Or does RSI expect us to fork over another \$1k to learn the secrets of the new features?

Just Wondering,

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