On Monday, September 21, 2015 at 8:19:20 PM UTC-3, laura...@gmail.com wrote:
> Why on earth does IDL require you to set the position of a legend by specifying a location for the upper RIGHT corner? It's much easier to see the upper left corner, and you don't have to keep readjusting the location every time the length of the labels changes. The more I try to do in IDL, the more I think it's time to learn Python....

I am not quite sure what you mean... Do you want a legend box that sits next to the left side? This would be the case requiring to change the coordinates with text length, if the coordinates are those of the right side.

Anyway, if you mean Function Graphics, you can choose whether the coordinates you give are those of the right or left side (or top or bottom, or center, or anywhere in between):

p=plot(/test,name='plot 1')

;put a legend box in the center:
l=legend(target=p,$
 position=[0.5,0.5],/normal,horizontal_alignment=0.5,vertical _alignment=0.5)
;put a legend box in the top left:
l=legend(target=p,$
 position=[0.0,1.0],/normal,horizontal_alignment=0.0,vertical _alignment=1.0)
;put a legend box in the top right:
l=legend(target=p,$
 position=[1.0,1.0],/normal,horizontal_alignment=1.0,vertical _alignment=1.0)
;put a legend box in the bottom left:
l=legend(target=p,$
 position=[0.0,0.0],/normal,horizontal_alignment=0.0,vertical _alignment=0.0)
;put a legend box in the bottom right:
l=legend(target=p,$
 position=[1.0,0.0],/normal,horizontal_alignment=1.0,vertical _alignment=0.0)

Intermediate values for horizontal/vertical alignment allow for other possibilities. And there are aliases for the values 1.0 and 0.0: 'bottom', 'top', 'left' and 'right'
(http://www.exelisvis.com/docs/LEGEND.html#HORIZONT)