Subject: IDL 5.0 observations
Posted by smd on Fri, 06 Jun 1997 07:00:00 GMT

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I encountered the following annoyances in my use of IDL 5.0. I guess these can be added to the IDL 5 anomaly database.

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IDL 5.0 bugs/annoyances checked on Windows NT 3.51 (SP5)
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1) Window Size reporting error

Open a window of size 600 by 400 using
window,xs=600,ys=400

then check the window size of the window just opened by executing
help,/device

you will get the following response; note the last line for the window size

Available graphics_devices: CGM HP NULL PCL PRINTER PS WIN Z
Current graphics device: WIN
   Screen Resolution: 1280x1024
   Simultaneously displayable colors: 16777216
   System colors reserved by Windows: 0
   IDL Color Table Entries: 256
   NOTE: this is a TrueColor device
   NOT using Decomposed color
   Graphics Function: 3 (copy)
   Current Font: Arial
   Default Backing Store: None.
   Window Status: (ID: Type(x, y, backing store))
     0: Window (600, 401,   Pixmap)

which seems to indicate ysize of 401 and not 400. This happens consistently with ysize reported as 1 more than the correct value.

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2) Exit IDL keyboard command problem

The only way to get the cursor onto the command line using only the keyboard and not the mouse is by using Ctrl-W. Unfortunately the key which exits IDL is Ctrl-Q and since W and Q are right next to each other

on the keyboard, it is very easy to shut down IDL when the user actually intended to put the focus on the command line. This is a pretty serious consequence of a simple typing mistake. Nor does IDL give the user an opportunity to confirm whether he/she wanted to actually exit IDL or not.

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3) Command can be entered only after focus is moved to command line

IDL version 4.0.1 allowed the user to type in commands even when the cursor was in the log window and not in the command line window. IDL 5.0 requires the user to use either the mouse or the keyboard (Ctrl-W) to first place the cursor on the command line, before any text typed in actually enters the command line.