I totally understand Richard's point of view!
I also think that the IDL widgets are disappointing, dated look & feel and have limited functionality.
At some point I started developing my own widget library based on graphic objects. I didn't finish but I know it is something it could be developed.

I always thought that if I had to create a large IDL application I would incorporate the Java-Bridge and develop the interface using a nice Java GUI framework. This would imply much more work but the final look & feel would be definitely nicer.

Nata