Subject: Re: Widgets and research
Posted by mgs on Sun, 15 Jun 1997 07:00:00 GMT
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In article <5nrmgq$jlm@news.aero.org>, meinel@altair.aero.org (Edward S. Meinel) wrote:

> Jonathan Rogness <rogness@NO.sg1.SPAM.cr.usgs.gov> sez:
>
>> David Fanning wrote:
>>> When they are shown how easy it really is, they often start
>>> taking the view that widget programs are essential to their research
>>> and they don't know how they worked without them.
>>
>> I'd be interested in hearing some of these people speak up, just because
>> I'm curious about how exactly they incorporate widgets into their
>> research.
>
> OK, I'll bite. I started using widgets because I got tired of typing
> lots of commands on the command line. I wrote my own image processing
> widget since no existing program satisfied my needs. Now when I want
> to try a new algorithm, I write a .pro file for the main processing
> and add a couple of lines to the main widget to assign the processing
> to a menu. It has made algorithm development fast and easy.

I started using IDL's widgets when I was forced into IDL about six years
ago (I just realized it has been six years!) at a new job. I was into Motif
programming at the time, so it was natural to try doing the equivalent with
IDL that I was used to with Motif. I really got into it after taking a
class from David Fanning. David's class had a big impact on my programming.
Within a year of taking the class I won an IDL license from RSI when they
held an application development contest.

I wonder if David will have a class on using IDL's objects and the new
drawing model in the near future. Perhaps a two-day class for those that
are pretty familiar with the other aspects of IDL programming.

> On the other hand, I am reluctant to try IDL 5.beta because of all the
> reports of broken widgets. Do _any_ widgets developed with IDL 4 work
> under 5.0?

Yes, the majority of my widget applications are working fine. I've been
having problems with overlapping widget hierarchies, though. Particularly
when I let one hierarchy be its natural size, and force another hierarchy
to be the same size as the first using scroll keywords. RSI has asked for
some code to duplicate this which I will get to real soon now.

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Interactive Visuals
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